コンダクター
The Conductor
原作
神永学
Manabu Kaminaga
作画
野奇夜
Nokiya
1
ASUKA COMICS DX

The Conductor
Illustrated by Nokiya

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The Conductor

第一日目

THIS IS...?
IT HURTS TO BREATHE.
WHY AM I HERE...
—DARKNESS

A BAR-
RIER...!?
IT'S LIKE
THIS IS
SLAM
NO!!
LET ME
OUT!!
A COF-
FIN...!?

SFX: BAM
THIS IS A BELL...?
...NO...
IT SEEMS TO BE RESO-NATING WITH THE SOUND,
THE WALL...
THE DARKN-ESS IS DISAP-PEARING.

THIS IS THE UNI-VERSITY'S HALL...
AND THIS SOUND IS FROM

...SOME-
BODY
IS HERE.
A PIPE ORGAN——
WHO?

WHAT IS HE HOLDING?
SFX: SLIP

SFX: GRIN

SCARY...
I SHOULD RUN... BUT
I'M FALLING INTO THE DARKNESS AGAIN—
AHH...

I'M MATSU-ZAKI, THE COUNSELLOR.
DAY ONE— KUCHIKI NAOMI
SO YOU'RE KUCHIKI NAOMI-SAN.
YES.

HE'S MUCH YOUNGER THAN I THOUGHT...
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.
LET'S START OFF WITH A SIMPLE GAME.
A GAME?
WHETHER IT IS RIGHT OR NOT, PLEASE ANSWER "YES" TO EVERY-THING I SAY.
ARE YOU FEMALE?
AH, UM
"YES"
AH. YES..
ARE YOU MALE?
..."YES"

YOU WORK
AS A MUSICIAN.
ARE YOU MARRIED?
"YES"
I DON'T EVEN HAVE A LOVER.
DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN?
"YES"
ARE YOU RIGHT HANDED?
"YES"
WHY——
I DION'T MENTION THAT WHEN I MADE THE APPOINTMENT!!
PLEASE ANSWER "YES" TO EVERYTHING.

...“YES”
YOUR INSTRUMENT IS THE FLUTE.
AGAIN
UM!!
ASK YOUR QUESTION LATER.
The reason you came here
was because you were troubled by a dream.
YOU ARE THINKING,
“HOW DOES HE KNOW?”
...YES
...

SFX: CLATTER
WHAT'S GOING ON...?
I APOLOGISE FOR SUR-PRISING YOU.
I WILL REVEAL THE TRICK.

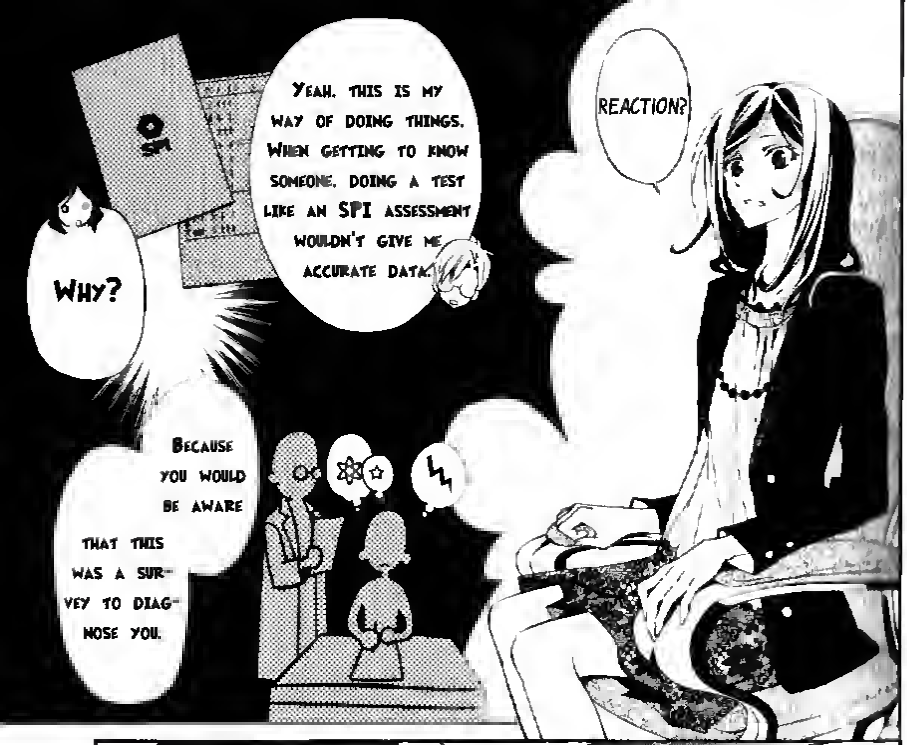
KNOWING YOUR OCCUPATION WAS SIMPLE.
YESTERDAY, WHEN I RECEIVED YOUR CALL I COULD FAINTLY HEAR THE SOUNDS OF A CELLO SUITE ACCOMPANIMENT.
IT WAS A GOOD PIECE.
FIRST, PLEASE TAKE A SEAT.
REVEAL THE TRICK?

WHEN WE WERE DECIDING THE TIME OF THE APPOINTMENT YOU SAID "I WOULD LIKE IT TOMORROW BECAUSE I HAVE A REHEARSAL THE DAY AFTER".
BUT JUST BY THAT...

INDEED,
BUT HAVEN'T YOU BROUGHT YOUR INSTRUMENT WITH YOU NOW?
...I NEVER SAID WHAT KIND OF REHEARSAL IT WAS
IT MAY NOT LOOK LIKE IT, BUT I PLAYED AN INSTRUMENT WHEN I WAS YOUNGER.
IF I SEE THE CASE THEN, I USUALLY KNOW WHAT INSTRUMENT IT IS.

THAT'S RIGHT...
WEREN'T YOU THINKING OF GOING TO THE MUSIC STORE FOR MAINTENANCE BECAUSE YOU HAVE A REHEARSAL TOMORROW?
AFTER THIS COUNSELLING SESSION IS OVER,
THIS TIME I'M JUST GUESSING
I CAN TELL THAT YOU ARE TROUBLED DUE TO LACK OF SLEEP.
I CAN SEE DARK CIRCLES UNDER YOUR EYES.
WHEN YOU CAN'T SLEEP, YOUR EYES BECOME BLOODSHOT.
THE DARK CIRCLES UNDER YOUR EYES ARE PROOF THAT ALTHOUGH YOU SLEEP, YOU DON'T FEEL RESTED.
HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT I WAS TROUBLED BY A DREAM?
BUT THERE ARE STILL THINGS THAT AREN'T CLEAR...

I CAN'T ARGUE AGAINST HIM.
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO FROM THE BEGINNING?
BUT...
HE HAS AMAZING POWERS OF PERCEPTION...
I wanted to see your reaction.


REACTION?
YEAH. THIS IS MY WAY OF DOING THINGS. WHEN GETTING TO KNOW SOMEONE, DOING A TEST LIKE AN SPI ASSESSMENT WOULDN'T GIVE ME ACCURATE DATA.
WHY?
BECAUSE YOU WOULD BE AWARE THAT THIS WAS A SURVEY TO DIAGNOSE YOU.

I SEE...
BUT THERE MUST BE OTHER METHODS. .
IF I WANT TO LEARN THAT PERSON'S TRUE NATURE, I HAVE TO GET THEM ANGRY FIRST.

Rage bares a person's emotions.

WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY?
TREATING PEOPLE LIKE LAB ANIMALS.
BUT FOR SOME REASON I DON'T FEEL ANGRY.
RATHER, I DON'T FEEL TENSE.
I FEEL AS IF I CAN RELAX WHEN TALKING TO THIS DOCTOR.

ABOUT THAT
I WAS FALLING INTO THE DARKNESS—
THE DREAM
ALWAYS ENDS THERE.
TERRIFYING DREAM TOO—

EVEN JUST REMEMBER-ING HURTS
MOVES
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?

I'M FINE.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
glance
A MONOTONOUS VOICE... AN EXPRESSIONLESS FACE...
I FEEL MUCH CALMER.
YOUR EXPRESSION BECAME LESS TENSE.
BUT...

EH?
ME?
IT WAS A JOKE!
...MY FACE WAS TENSE?
I THOUGHT YOU WERE STILL ANGRY.
NO...
WELL...
TELLING A JOKE WITH NO EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE...
NOW,
LET'S GET BACK TO TALKING ABOUT YOUR DREAM.

...I'M NOT THAT SURE,
IT FEELS LIKE IT WAS REALLY RECENT, BUT IT ALSO FEELS LIKE IT WAS FROM YEARS EARLIER.
HOW OFTEN DO YOU HAVE THAT DREAM?
ALMOST EVERYDAY.
SINCE WHEN?
IS THAT SO...?
SORRY.
THERE'S NO NEED TO APOLOGISE.
SO YOU DON'T RECOGNISE THE PERSON IN YOUR DREAM.

YEARNING?

I SAID SOMETHING STRANGE, DIDN'T I?
NO, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.
HE'S THE SOURCE OF MY FEAR, YET HE'S SOMEONE I YEARN FOR...
BECAUSE FEAR AND YEARNING DO NOT HAVE CONTRADICTING MEANINGS.

CONDITION...?
IF ONE CONDITION IS FULFILLED,
THEN YOU CAN YEARN FOR ANYONE.

I CAN'T SEE HIS FACE CLEARLY, SO I DON'T KNOW.
BUT IT FELT LIKE
HE WAS SOMEONE I'VE BEEN YEARNING FOR.

The condition wherein you acknowledge that you know the person.
I KNOW..
THAT PERSON?
THAT PERSON IN THE DREAM?
THAT'S...
DO I REALLY KNOW HIM?

THE PERSON IN THE DREAM
IS A MAN, ISN'T HE?
..HOW WERE YOU ABLE TO DETERMINE THAT?
DIDN'T YOU NOTICE THE SIGNS?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
PLEASE DO NOT PANIC.
EARLIER IN THE CONVERSATION, YOU SAID "HE".

I...
..NO...
YOU DON'T REMEMBER?
...I DID?
I SEE.
WHAT?
WHY ISN'T HE SAYING ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT?
WHAT'S GOING ON WITH ME?

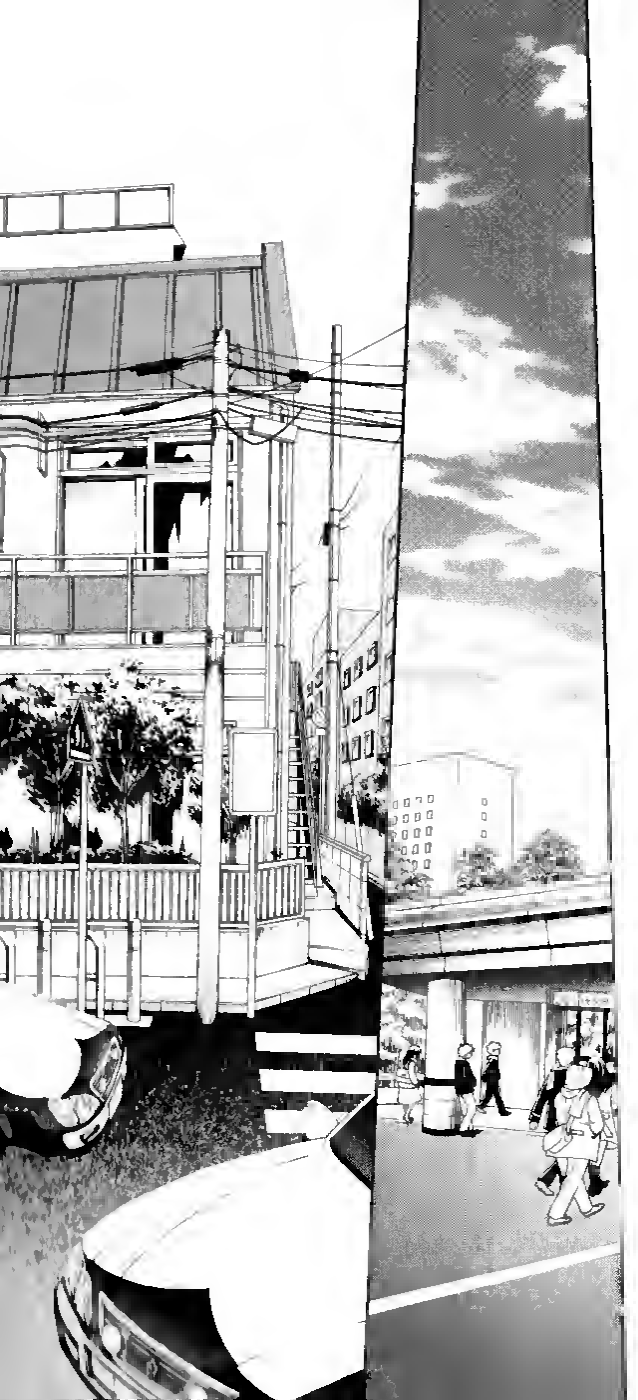
I KNOW THAT MAN!?
KUCHIKI-SAN
IT'S NOT GOOD TO FORCE YOURSELF TO REMEMBER
—I REALLY DON'T KNOW HIM...

A PERSON'S MIND
CONSTANTLY FORGETS.
IT'S KNOWN AS A KIND OF SURVIVAL INSTINCT.
IF PAINFUL OR UN-PLEASANT MEMORIES
CONSTANTLY REMAIN VIVID, THEY BURDEN A PERSON'S HEART.
SO THE ACT OF FORGETTING
PROTECTS YOUR HEART.
ARE YOU SAYING THAT UNPLEASANT MEMORIES ARE BEING ELIMINATED?
THAT'S SOMEWHAT WRONG.
WHEN I SAY "FORGET", I DON'T MEAN THAT THEY'RE COMPLETELY ELIMINATED.
THEY MERELY SINK INTO THE PROFOUND DARKNESS OF THE MEMORY.

It might be better to say that you are locking up memories.
especially frightening ones that will be traumatic,
so that you won't remember them.

I...
HAVE YOU HAD ANY FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCES IN THE PAST?
I'M JUST MENTIONING IT AS A POSSIBILITY.
THAT'S WHY I BEGAN HAVING THAT DREAM?
IT WAS JUST FORGETTING THAT?

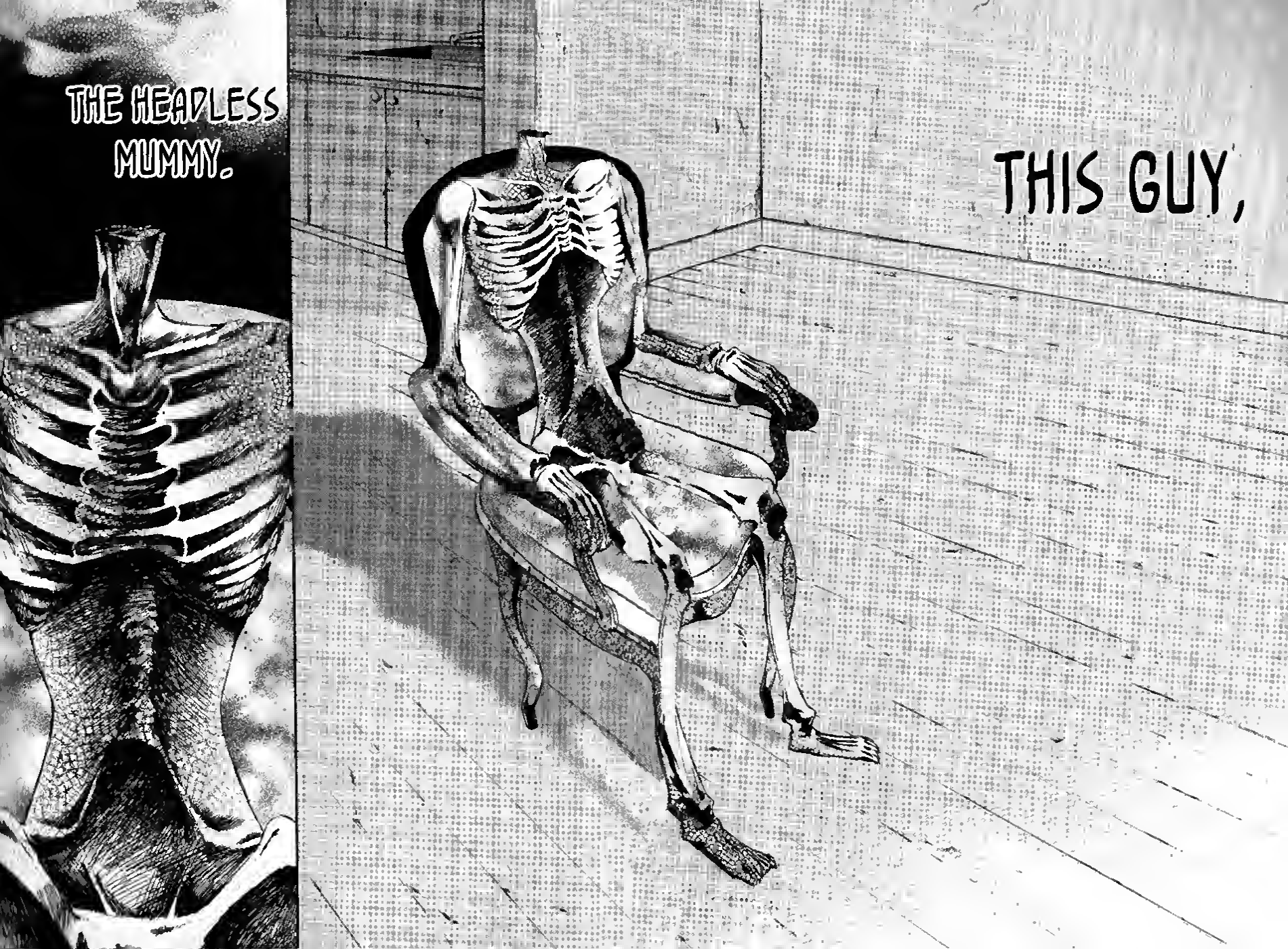
TODAY I'LL GIVE YOU SOME SLEEPING PILLS
AFTER TAKING THE PILLS, DON'T DRIVE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT
THE DREAM THAT REPEATS DAY AFTER DAY.
THAT IS THE DARK-NESS IN MY HEART.



WHAT EXACTLY IS IT THAT I'M AFRAID OF—?

SFX: TAP
DAY ONE – ISHIKURA TSUYOSHI
ALRIGHT
THANKS FOR YOUR HARD WORK
MOVES
THE INCIDENT BEGAN WITH AN ANONYMOUS TELEPHONE CALL

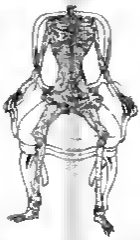
AT FIRST, I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A PRANK CALL.
"There is a corpse in the apartment"
BUT JUST TO BE SURE, I WENT TO CHECK. HOWEVER, THE LOCAL POLICE HAD ALREADY DISCOVERED IT.


THE HEADLESS MUMMY.
THIS GUY,

IF THEY WANTED TO HIDE ITS IDENTITY, THEN THEY SHOULD HAVE JUST DESTROYED THE FACE.
IF THEY WERE AFRAID OF IT BEING DISCOVERED, THEN WHAT WAS THE POINT OF EXPOSING THE CORPSE IN SUCH A DRAMATIC WAY..
INSPECTOR ISHIKURA!
BUT...
FOR WHAT PURPOSE?
WHAT IS IT, ARAGAKI?

IN AN APARTMENT DEVOID OF LIFE,

THERE WAS A CORPSE THAT HAD BEEN DEAD FOR AT LEAST TWO OR THREE YEARS.



IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THE CORPSE WAS LEFT IN THIS STATE OUT OF EXTREME NEGLECT.

IT WOULD BE CORRECT TO SAY THAT SOMEONE INTENTIONALLY CARRIED THE CORPSE HERE AND HID THE HEAD.

THIS WAS
IN THE CORPSE'S HAND.
SO, THE CORPSE WAS HOLDING IT?
IT LOOKS QUITE OLD. IT'S DIFFICULT TO SEE.
YEAH, IT WAS GRASPED TIGHTLY IN THE RIGHT HAND
SO SOMEONE IN THE PHOTO IS THE VICTIM?
I DON'T KNOW.

THIS GUY... SO MUCH FOR AN ELITE RECRUIT!
IT'S RIDICULOUS FOR SOMEONE SO YOUNG TO BE AN ASSISTANT INSPECTOR.
Eh
IT MIGHT BE A BIT DIFFICULT.
..CAN YOU FIND THE PEOPLE IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH?
24TH OF DECEMBER, 2003.
CHRISTMAS EVE FIVE YEARS AGO...?
THAT... IT LOOKS LIKE A CHRIST-MAS TREE.
...WHAT IS THIS?
This object

YES, SIR!
GET THE INVESTIGATORS TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS
ONCE YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT THAT OBJECT IS, YOU CAN PROBABLY FIND WHERE THEY TOOK THE PHOTO.
BUT...
I CAN'T BE FOCUSED ON THAT ALONE.
THIS IS SOMETHING THAT SOMEONE CREATED INTENTIONALLY.
PERHAPS THAT PHOTO WAS ALSO SUPPOSED TO BE SEEN BY US
IN ORDER TO STIR UP AN INVESTIGATION.
AS A WRITTEN CHALLENGE TO US.

ARAGAKI!
YES!?
WHAT IS THAT!?
WASN'T IT THERE FROM THE START?
WHO KNOWS.
IT LOOKS LIKE AN APPLE.

YEAH,
DOESN'T IT RESEMBLE THE LOGO USED BY "APPLE COMPUTERS"?
AN APPLE?
AND THE HALLWAY DOOR?
IT WAS LOCKED.
I'M ASKING IF THE WINDOW WAS OPEN FROM THE BEGINNING!!
Eh—
Ah. YES!
SO WAS IT LIKE THIS WHEN YOU CAME IN?
EH?
DESPITE THAT, THE WINDOW WAS DELIBERATELY LEFT OPEN?

BASICALLY, IT'S HIGHLY LIKELY THE CALLER WAS SOMEONE INVOLVED WITH THIS INCIDENT.
AND THE CALLER HAD BEEN USING A VOICE CHANGER.
HIS BODY WAS DISCOVERED BECAUSE OF AN ANONYMOUS PHONE CALL.
...I SEE.
ALSO, THAT APARTMENT IS UP A HILLY ROAD.
BUT ACTUALLY, IT'S THE OPPOSITE.
THE CORPSE LOOKED AS IF IT WAS GAZING OUT THE WINDOW.
ALTHOUGH IT WOULD EVENTUALLY BE DISCOVERED IF LEFT LONG ENOUGH,
THE GUY WENT THROUGH THE TROUBLE OF USING A VOICE CHANGER
AND CONTROLLED THE TIME OF DISCOVERY.

SO THEY COULD
ENJOY WATCHING US
RUSHING ABOUT
FROM THE OPEN WINDOW.

I'VE FOUND WHERE THE CRIMINAL IS LOOKING FROM.
Just wait.
I'll catch you for sure.
HE IS...

SOMEWHERE THAT CAN BE SEEN FROM THIS WINDOW—!
DAY ONE – YUUKI YASUFUMI

THIS IS AIDA, THE PRODUCER.
ding dong
IT'S OPEN.
beep
SORRY, I'M A BIT LATE.
YOU'RE ON TIME.
WELL, PLEASE SIT DOWN.

THE DIRECTOR OF THE MUSICAL I'M PRODUCING BECAME UNWELL TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE AND RESIGNED.
THEN I WAS SUDDENLY UNABLE TO CONTACT THE CONDUCTOR OF THE ORCHESTRA...

DO YOU WANT ANYTHING TO DRINK?
NO... ACTUALLY,

I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO DO AFTER THIS.
THERE ARE STILL VARIOUS PROBLEMS LEFT TO DEAL WITH...

.....
WELL... IT MUST BE QUITE TOUGH.

YES, THAT'S RIGHT. THE TICKETS ARE ALREADY ON SALE TOO...
SO I CONTACTED YOU TO SEE IF YOU COULD BE THE SUBSTITUTE CONDUCTOR.
WHY ME?
I JUST CAME BACK FROM STUDYING ABROAD IN GERMANY, AND I HAVE NO CONNECTIONS WITH YOU...
NO... BUT... WELL...
I LISTENED TO YOUR CONCERT IN JAPAN, AND THOUGHT THAT YOU...
HOW SUSPI-CIOUS.
HE HAS PROBABLY CONTACTED EVERY SINGLE PERSON WHO HAS STUDIED ABROAD UNDER THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.
BUT

HAVE YOU TAKEN A LOOK AT THE PLOT AND SCORE?
KIND OF.
A MODERN VERSION OF "HAMLET", EH?
BOTH THE PLOT AND SCORE ARE UNORIGINAL.
FRANKLY, I'M NOT INTERESTED AT ALL.
HAVE YOU FOUND A DIRECTOR?
IT MIGHT BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER FROM THE MISTAKES I MADE WHILE STUDYING ABROAD IN GERMANY.
OH?
A TALENTED PERSON WOULDN'T TAKE OVER AN UNFINISHED MUSICAL SO EASILY.
THAT'S UNLIKELY.
THIS IS STRANGE FOR ME TO SAY, BUT HE IS BETTER THAN THE PREVIOUS DIRECTOR
YEAH,
I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TOMORROW. HE IS CONSIDERABLY TALENTED

PERHAPS THAT PERSON IS SOMEONE WHO HAS ALREADY DAMAGED HIS REPUTATION.
LIKE ME—
SO I WOULD REALLY LIKE TO HEAR YOUR ANSWER.
I'LL ACCEPT.

AND ABOUT THE MATTER OF PAYMENT...
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
I'M REALLY RELIEVED.
NOW THAT I'VE ACCEPTED, NEGOTIATING THE PAYMENT WOULD BE DIFFICULT.
IS HE JOKING?
PLEASE GIVE ME THE AGREED AMOUNT.
...WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
ACTUALLY, I WANT TO DISCUSS THAT...
DEPENDING ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, IT'S ACTUALLY NOT BAD.

THE TRUTH IS... THE CURRENT PROBLEM IS THAT THE PRODUCTION COSTS HAVE BEEN CUT.
THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT...
I THOUGHT THAT YOU COULD BECOME THE SPONSOR.
...NOT ONLY DO YOU WANT ME TO WORK, BUT YOU'RE SAYING YOU WANT ME TO PAY AS WELL?
LOOKING AT THE SITUATION,THIS IS PROBABLY THE ONLY WAY.
RIDICU-LOUS!
30 MILLION YEN SHOULD BE FINE.
GO HOME! FORGET ABOUT OUR CONVERSA-TION!

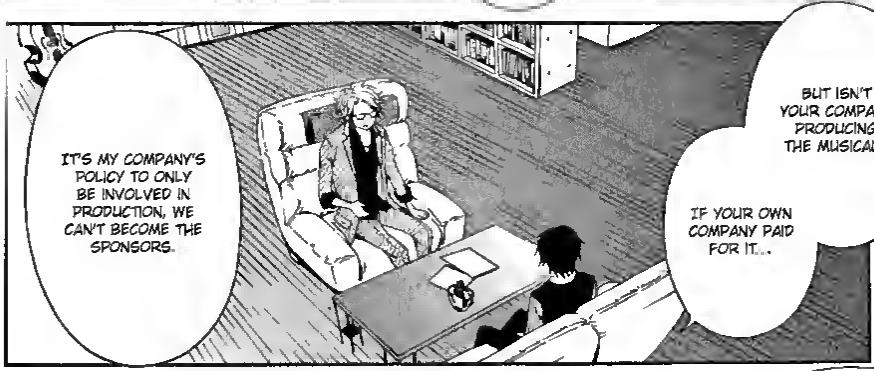
HOW ABOUT THIRTY PERCENT OF THE PROFITS?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WHY DON'T WE SIT DOWN AND TALK?

SO A SIMPLE CALCULATION FOR ONE MONTH'S WORTH OF PERFORMANCES WOULD BE 576 MILLION YEN.
THE VENUE IS A THEATRE THAT SEATS 1200 PEOPLE, AND THE TICKETS AVERAGE AT 12000 YEN EACH.
ONE PERFORMANCE WILL NET AROUND 14140000 YEN.
I DON'T THINK THAT A MUSICAL WITH MONEY PROBLEMS CAN TURN UP A DECENT PROFIT.
YOU CAN'T BE SURE
FOR THIS MUSICAL

THEN 600 MILLION IS NOTHING.
AND THAT'S NOT ALL.
IF YOU CONSIDER THE PROFITS FROM THE PROGRAMMES, CD'S AND DVD'S
HAMLET
HAMLET

AND I'LL GET 30 PERCENT OF THAT?
ALTHOUGH THE PRODUCTION COSTS WILL BE 200 MILLION,
THERE WILL BE 400 MILLION IN PROFITS.
600 MILLION
gulp
YES.
WITH AN INVESTMENT OF 30 MILLION, YOU'LL GET 120 MILLION.
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S PRETTY CHEAP?
YES, BUT IN THIS INDUSTRY, MOST OF THE COSTS ARE DEFERRED PAYMENTS.
THERE'S NO WAY 30 MILLION YEN WOULD COVER THE PRODUCTION COSTS ..
A WEEK AGO, 80 PERCENT OF THE TICKETS WERE ALREADY SOLD.
IF PEOPLE DON'T COME THEN WE'RE FINISHED.

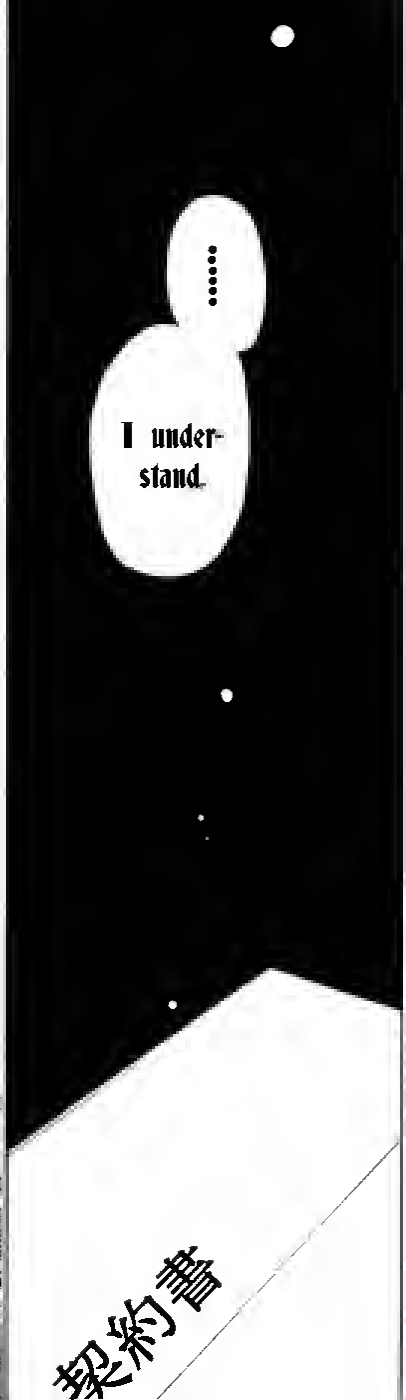
I SEE.
AS YOU KNOW, THE DIRECTOR RESIGNED AND THE CONDUCTOR DISAPPEARED.
BECAUSE OF THAT, A MAJOR SPONSOR CANCELLED ON US.
BUT IF THE PAYMENTS ARE DEFERRED, THEN WHY ISN'T THERE ENOUGH TO COVER THE PRODUCTION COSTS?


BUT ISN'T YOUR COMPANY PRODUCING THE MUSICAL?
IF YOUR OWN COMPANY PAID FOR IT...
IT'S MY COMPANY'S POLICY TO ONLY BE INVOLVED IN PRODUCTION, WE CAN'T BECOME THE SPONSORS.

ALTHOUGH WE KNOW THAT IT WILL BE PROFITABLE, IF WE CONTINUE THIS WAY, THE PERFORMANCE WILL BE CANCELLED AND WE'LL HAVE TO REIMBURSE THE TICKETS.
PLEASE HELP SOMEHOW!
.....
WHY DID YOU ASK ME?

I heard that your father was the well-known president of Yuuki Trading.
HE DIDN'T CONSIDER ME FOR THE ROLE OF SUBSTITUTE CONDUCTOR BECAUSE OF MY ABILITY.
I SEE.
IF IT'S 40 PERCENT, THEN I'LL THINK ABOUT IT.

IF THAT'S NO GOOD,
THEN THIS CONVERSATION IS OVER.


I under-
stand.
契約書

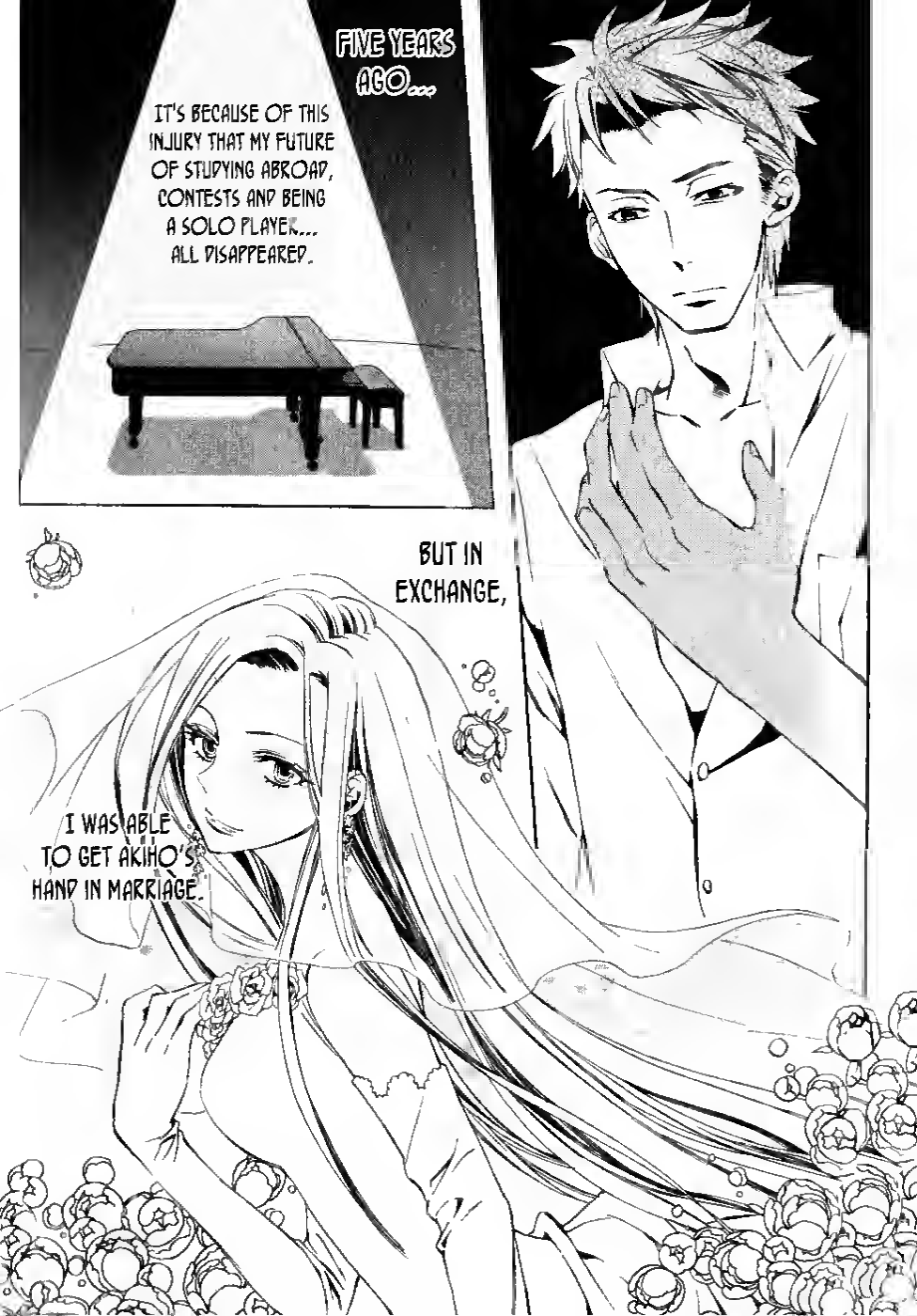
AKIHO—
THE WINDOW'S OPEN?
WOO
A PATROL CAR...?
WOO
DAY ONE
–TAMAKI KAZUO
SFX: GETS UP

SFX: SHARP PAIN
WHY DOES IT HURT?
UGH...
THIS WOUND IS FIVE YEARS OLD...
AKIHO—
...YOU'RE NOT HERE.
I'VE GOT TO PREPARE FOR TOMORROW.
beep
HELLO?
GOOD MORNING.

FOR THAT MUSICAL WHICH IS ON HOLD...
BUT DON'T JUST LEAVE WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING.
YOU WERE SLEEPING SO WELL THOUGH.
I WAS AWAKE.
CHRISTMAS LAST YEAR!
HAVE I EVER LIED TO YOU?
LIAR.
"AKIHO"
YOU LIED ABOUT NOT BEING ABLE TO GO ON A DATE BECAUSE OF WORK,
AND THEN SURPRISED ME WHEN I GOT HOME, DIDN'T YOU?

...GIVE ME A BREAK!
I'LL LIE AGAIN AND AGAIN, IF IT WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY.
ANYWAY, I FORGOT TO CLOSE THE WINDOW WHEN I LEFT.
YOU MIGHT CATCH A COLD.
I'M ON THE SEVENTH FLOOR, THERE'S NOTHING TO STEAL HERE EITHER.
I LOVE YOU.
"LET'S GET MARRIED."

SFX: CLATTER
beep
EH? WHAT? I CAN'T HEAR YOU.
. ME TOO.
HEY!
SEE YOU TOMORROW
IN THIS ROOM OVERFLOWING WITH OUR LIVES,
BUT IT WILL BE DYED WITH HER COLOUR.
IT'S SUCH A DULL ROOM RIGHT NOW,


FIVE YEARS AGO...
IT'S BECAUSE OF THIS INJURY THAT MY FUTURE OF STUDYING ABROAD, CONTESTS AND BEING A SOLO PLAYER... ALL DISAPPEARED.
BUT IN EXCHANGE,
I WAS ABLE TO GET AKIHO'S HAND IN MARRIAGE.

EVEN IF
I WAS THROUGH
IS OOR AND
PIGH MEANS.
AT ANY RATE, A PERSON'S HAPPINESS
JUST CONSISTS OF ANOTHER
PERSON'S UNHAPPINESS.
IT'S JUST
LIKE THAT.

NINE YEARS AGO—
WHEN I SAW HER IN THE UNIVERSITY QUAD,
I THOUGHT MY HEART WOULD BE CRUSHED.

I WOULD DO ANYTHING TO SEIZE THE CHANCE, SO I TOOK ACTION.

BUT THE GODDESS OF DESTINY TURNED TO ME.

clack
AFTER THAT,
SHE FINALLY BECAME MINE.
CHOPIN'S "POLONAISE NO. 6 IN A-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 53".
SFX: PAIN

THE OLD WOUND ON MY LEFT HAND STILL...
BUT IT SHOULD HAVE HEALED BY NOW!
Why...
WHY...
SFX: PAIN
WHY...

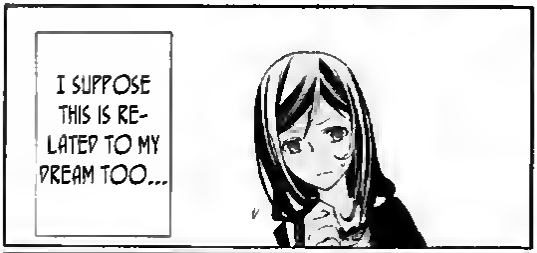
SFX: CLATTERING
IN TODAY'S COUNSELLING SESSION,
I HAVE A FEELING THAT THE IMAGE BECAME CLEAR

DOCTOR MATSUZAKI

ENTERS ANOTHER PERSON'S HEART WITHOUT HESITATING.

THE IMAGE OF "THE MAN HOLDING THE SKULL"...

NORMALLY YOU'D PROBABLY THINK OF IT AS RUDE.
BUT SOMEHOW I DON'T FEEL ANY DISCOMFORT, RATHER, I'M RELIEVED.
"IF IT'S THAT DOCTOR, THEN I CAN RELY ON HIM"...
AH—
SFX: BAM


I SUPPOSE THIS IS RE-LATED TO MY DREAM TOO...

chatter
chatter

I WONDER WHY
I GET CHILLS WHEN A MAN TOUCHES ME.

9課12
POLICE
456
WHAT HAPPENED?
A POLICE CAR AND THE PRESS...

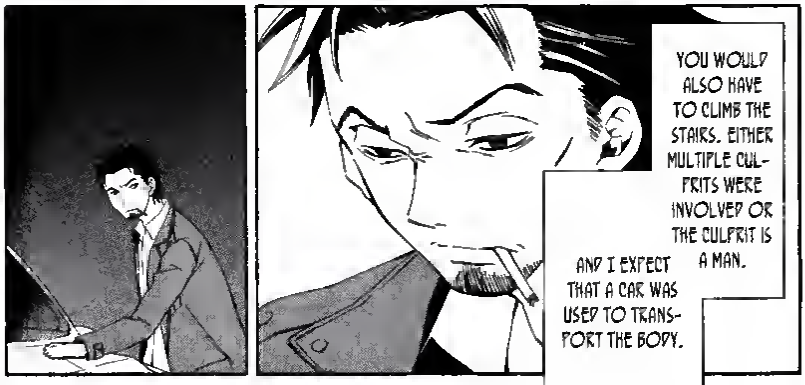
A POLICE-MAN...?
AH
UM, WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

THE TRUTH IS THAT A BODY WAS DISCOVERED IN THAT APARTMENT.

THAT'S SO SUDDEN...
I'D ALSO LIKE TO ASK IF YOU'VE SEEN ANY SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD RECENTLY?
THEN HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THE PERSON WHO LIVES IN APARTMENT 201?
SFX: SLAM
INSPECTOR ISHIKURA...
SFX: KICKING
カッ
カッ

WHAT'S YOUR ROOM NUMBER?
203
MAY I HAVE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS TOO?"
AH.
COULD YOU TELL ME YOUR NAME JUST IN CASE?
MY NAME IS KUCHIKI.
朽木奈緒美
THANK YOU VERY MUCH

YOU WOULD HAVE TO WALK THROUGH THIS NARROW ROAD TO GET TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME.
SFX: FLAP


YOU WOULD ALSO HAVE TO CLIMB THE STAIRS. EITHER MULTIPLE CULPRITS WERE INVOLVED OR THE CULPRIT IS A MAN.
AND I EXPECT THAT A CAR WAS USED TO TRANSPORT THE BODY.

BUT IT'S DIFFICULT TO PARK A CAR IN THIS NARROW STREET.
THERE'S NO SPACE FOR A CAR TO PASS.
IF SO, THEN IT MIGHT BE EASY TO GET SOME EYE WITNESS EVIDENCE...
NO, WAS IT REALLY LIKE THAT?
THE CULPRIT IS THOROUGH AND CAREFUL.
HE MADE AN ANONYMOUS PHONE CALL WHILE USING A VOICE CHANGER AND REPORTED THE MATTER VERY QUICKLY.
HE ALSO DIDN'T LEAVE BEHIND ANY FOOTPRINTS OR FINGERPRINTS AT THE SCENE OF THE CRIME.
DESPITE ALL THAT, HE GOT THE CORPSE TO HOLD THE PHOTO
AND DREW THAT SHAPE ON THE WINDOW FRAME.

THIS IS ISHIKURA.
ring
WOULD SUCH A CRIMINAL DARE TO RISK DISCOVERY AND CASUALLY USE HIS CAR TO DROP THE BODY OFF...?
HELLO, IT'S ME.
NORIKO?
YOU SHOULD KNOW ALREADY WHAT I'M GOING TO SAY
I DON'T.
YOU ACTUALLY ALWAYS SEEM TO UNDERSTAND
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

IT SEEMS AS IF

IT'S HINTING AT SOMETHING.

THIS MONTH'S SHARE HASN'T BEEN PAID YET.
I PAID THAT MUCH CONSOLATION MONEY AND IT STILL ISN'T ENOUGH?
...IS THAT SO?
DON'T SAY THAT.
LAST MONTH'S WAS DELAYED TOO.
I CALLED TO CONFIRM LAST WEEK AS WELL
YOU SAID THAT "INCOMPATIBLE PERSONALITIES" WAS THE REASON FOR OUR DIVORCE.
I COULD HAVE SAID THAT AND NEVER HAD TO PAY THE SETTLEMENT.
BUT YOU WERE CHEATING ON ME WITH THE MANAGER AT YOUR PART-TIME JOB, AND WERE DIVORCING SO YOU COULD MARRY HIM.
I DIDN'T DO THAT BECAUSE...
DO YOU THINK THAT "I FORGOT" WORKS AS AN EXCUSE?
IT'S NOT AN EXCUSE.

I'M ONLY DOING IT FOR MY CHILD'S FUTURE.
REALLY?
AKIRA NEEDS MONEY FOR HIS EXAMS NEXT YEAR.
I'M SO ANGRY THAT I WANT TO BREAK THEIR NOSES.
AND THAT CURRENT HUSBAND WHO APPROVES OF THIS
JUST BECAUSE I WAS LATE, THAT WOMAN WHO DEMANDS CHILD SUPPORT FROM HER DIVORCED HUSBAND
IT'LL BE THERE AROUND THIS WEEK.
BUT
WHEN I THINK OF AKIRA...
SFX: STOMPING
DON'T PLAY DUMB. AKIRA'S LAPTOP.
AND DON'T SEND UNNECESSARY STUFF OVER.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

His birthday present...
AHH,
HE LIKED IT?
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS USE LAPTOPS.
I'M THE ONE WHO DECIDES THAT! DON'T INTERFERE!
WHY DID YOU DO IT? AKIRA'S STILL A MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT.

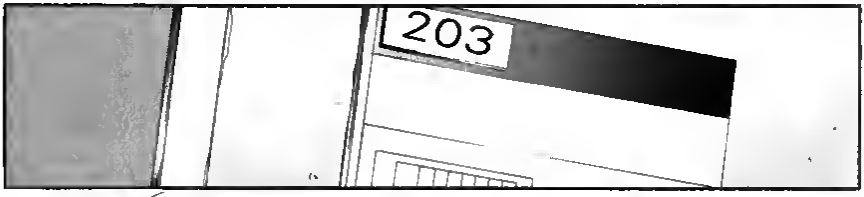
ANYWAY, MAKE SURE TO PAY THE EXPENSES, NOT PAYING CHILD SUPPORT AND BUYING A LAPTOP
IS COMPLETELY IRRESPONSIBLE!
click

SFX: BANG
SPIT
INSPECTOR ISHIKURA!
WHAT?
THERE WAS AN INCREDIBLE NOISE,
SO I THOUGHT SOMETHING WAS WRONG...

SFX: GLARE
So what if I did?
IT'S NOTHING.
UM...DID YOU DO THIS TO THE DOOR?
NO...
NO-THING...
THERE'S NO WAY A GUY WHO GETS SCARED
OF SOME-THING LIKE THIS COULD BECOME A SUCCESSFUL OFFICER.
IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE BECOMES MY BOSS.
NEXT YEAR, HE'LL BE AN INSPECTOR, AND IN A FEW YEARS, A SUPERINTENDENT.
BUT ARAGAKI, AN ELITE RECRUIT, BECAME AN ASSISTANT INSPECTOR SOON AFTER BEGINNING HIS POLICE CAREER.

EVERYTHING IS MESSED UP...

JUST THINKING ABOUT IT MAKES ME SICK.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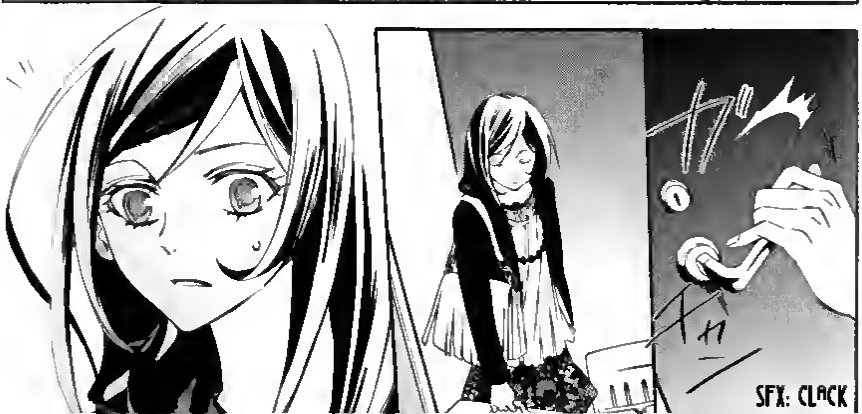
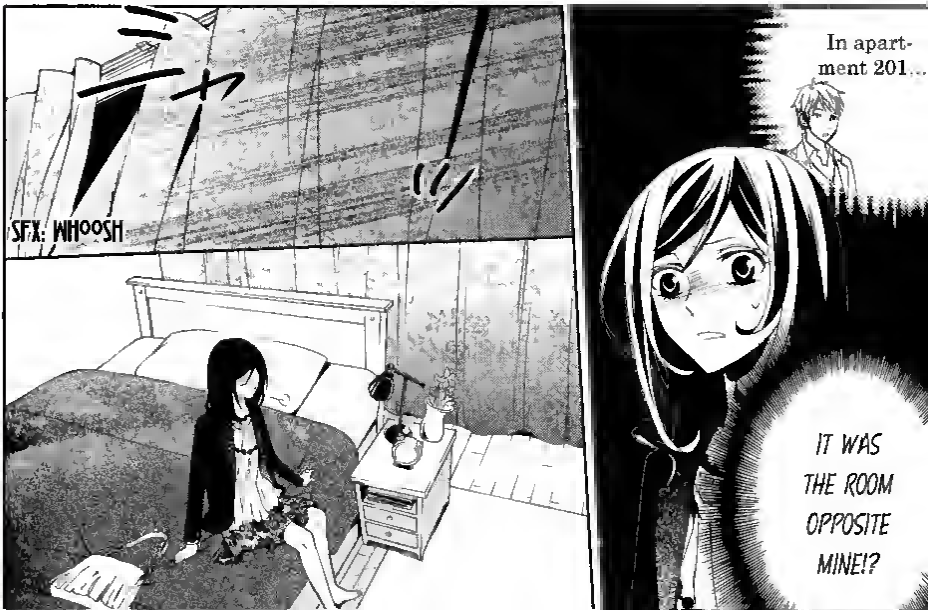

SFX: CLACK


SFX: WHOOSH
In apartment 201...
IT WAS THE ROOM OPPOSITE MINE!?

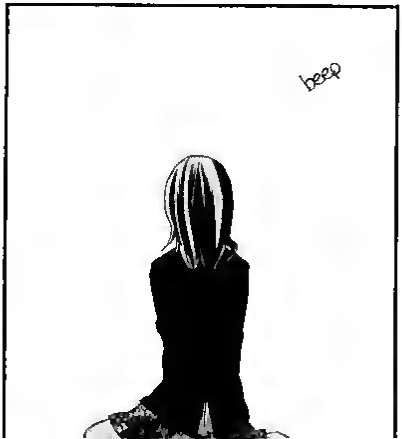
IS THIS KUCHIKI NAOMI-SAN'S PHONE?
HELLO?
SFX: VIBRATING
A NOTE-BOOK?
I CURRENTLY HAVE A NOTEBOOK WITH ME.
OKAY
THERE WAS SOMETHING I WANTED TO CONFIRM.
THIS VOICE—
WHOSE IS IT?
SOMEBODY WHO CAME TODAY PROBABLY FORGOT IT.
I THINK IT'S YOURS.
THIS IS THE COUNSELLOR, MATSUZAKI
GOOD EVENING.

IT CAN'T BE!!
IT'S RED LEATHER WITH A FLUTE PATTERN
SORRY ..
NO WAY~~
NO, DON'T WORRY.
!!
DIARY...
DON'T WORRY. I HAVEN'T LOOKED INSIDE
THAT NOTEBOOK IS MY DIARY...
BUT THANK GOODNESS I DIDN'T DROP IT.

EH?
THERE WAS ONLY ONE PERSON WHO CAME AFTER YOUR APPOINTMENT.
I WONDERED TO WHOM THE NOTEBOOK BELONGED TO, BUT THEN I SAW THE FLUTE PATTERN.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
SO I WANTED TO RETURN THE NOTEBOOK.
AH.
I DON'T MIND WAITING UNTIL THE NEXT SESSION.
But it's not for another week.
I CAN'T DO THAT
BUT...
I HAVE TIME OFF TOMORROW EVENING.
CAN WE MEET UP SOMEWHERE?

BUT GOING THROUGH ALL THE TROUBLE TO DO THAT IS TOO MUCH.
...BUT THIS ISN'T A DATE!
What am I doing?
IT'S NO TROUBLE.
THERE'S ALSO SOMETHING ON MY MIND...
:
THANK YOU VERY MUCH I'LL BE FREE AFTER SEVEN TOMORROW.
OKAY.
OKAY.
UNTIL THEN.

EH?
I'D—
I'D BE GLAD TO....


beep

fall
flop
thump
thump
thump
THE BED FEELS COMFORTABLE.

I WONDER IF
I CAN SLEEP
WITHOUT SEEING
THAT DREAM
TONIGHT...

These incidents and mysteries that overlap
like a mosaic
The true meaning is hidden...
Seriously,
Who on earth are you!?
The Conducter

Wagurelai and Hyper Parfait

Publisher: Kadokawa Shoten
Author: Kaminaga Manabu
Artist: Noki Ya

Scanner: Ayu
Cleaners: Ensuing & Saffron
Redrawing Artists: Ensuing & Miriallia
Image Editors: Miriallia & Sapphire Pyro
Translator: Saffron
Translation Checker: Yukihito
Proofreaders: Sapphire Pyro & Yukihito
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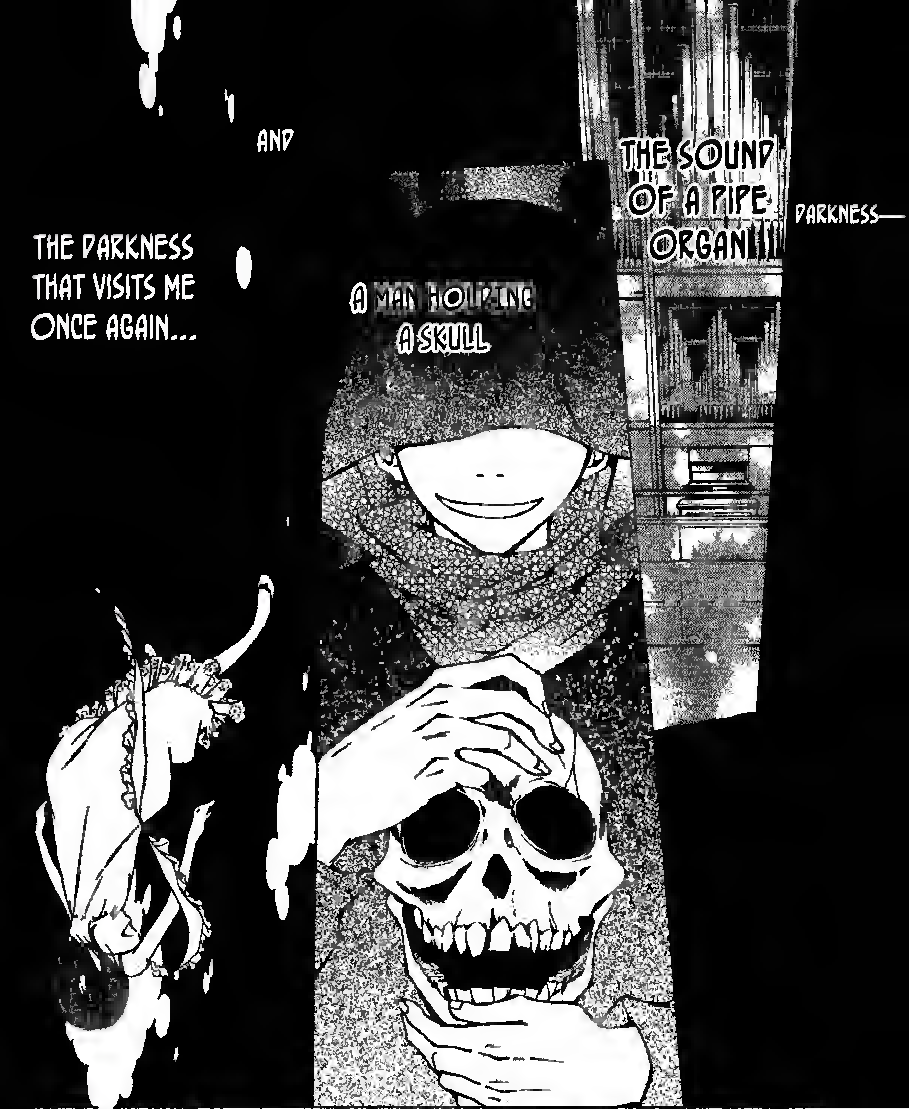
http://saffron-mkn.blogspot.com http://hyper-parfait.blogspot.com

READ, ENJOY, AND GO HYPER!

Who is being controlled by the conspiracy and made to dance...?
Conductor
THE NOVEL IS ALREADY HAVING AN ADDITIONAL PRINT RUN!
コンダクター
KADOKAWA BOOKS
[Conductor]
Kaminaga Manabu
A 60 page nonstop mystery suspense
コンダクター
The Conducter
Day 2 - 1
原作 神永学
MANABU KAMINAGA
作画 野奇夜
NOKIYA



コンダクター 人物紹介

朽木奈緒美
アルト奏者。あるトラウマが原因のうっかり屋。

結城康文
指揮者。ミュージカルの代役指揮者に。

玉木和夫
ピアノ奏者。5年前にケガが元でプロを諦める。

松崎
心理カウンセラー

ストーリー（前半）

◆毎夜繰り返される悪夢・音楽ホールで佇む奈緒美の前に、楯岡を持った見知らぬ男が現れる。その恐怖に悩まされた奈緒美はカウンセラーの松崎の許を訪れた。松崎によると、その男は奈緒美の「知っている」男だという。その日、奈緒美の隣のアパートで首吊りしミイラが発見される。手には数人の学生が写っている写真があった。そして、現場の窓には謎のリンゴマークが。

◆その事件を、ノンキャリアの刑事・右倉が追っていた。

◆プロデューサーの相葉は、突如行方不明になったコンダクターの代役に結城を指名する。

◆玉木と秋穂は結婚式を間近に控えた幸せの絶頂にあった。

◆こうして、第二日目の夜は更けていくのだが……。

DAY TWO — Kuchiki Naomi
MY HEAD HURTS.
I HAD THE SAME DREAM AGAIN.
YESTERDAY, I COULDN'T REMEMBER WHEN I STARTED HAVING THAT DREAM,
BUT THE UNIVERSITY HALL APPEARED IN THE DREAM, SO AT LEAST IT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED AFTER I STARTED ATTENDING UNIVERSITY...
SFX: PAIN

ANYHOW, I NEED TO WASH MY FACE...
MY HEADACHE GETS WORSE WHEN I TRY TO REMEMBER.
AS IF I'M UTTERLY REFUSING TO KNOW THE ANSWER.

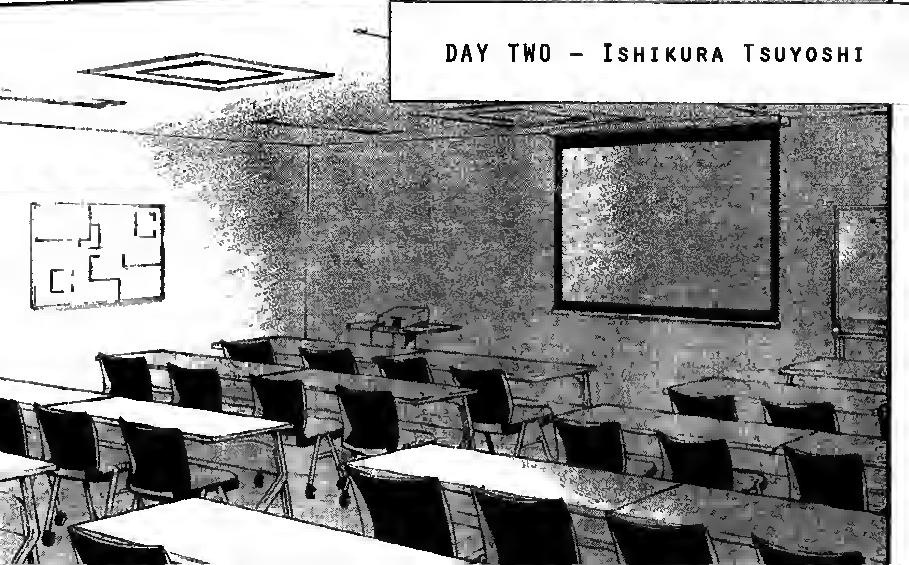
WHA...
REMEMBER

THE FRONT DOOR IS LOCKED
AND THE DOOR STOP IS IN PLACE TOO.
WHAT'S THIS?
WHO DID THIS...!?
roll
SFX: FALL

REMEMBER
I WROTE THIS?!
LIPSTICK...
N...
NO...
IT CAN'T BE...

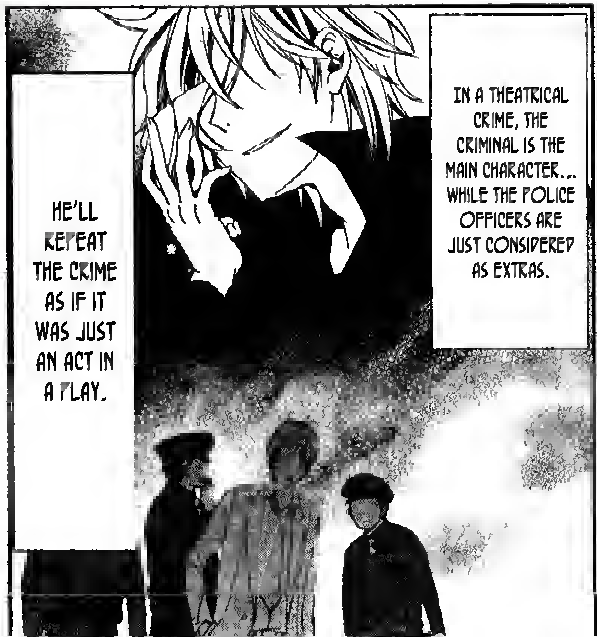
What's with that naming sense...?
WOW...
ISHIKURA-SAN, THAT NAME IS SO COOL!
National Investigation Headquarters of the Incident of the Headless Fetal Corpse Dumped in an Apartment

DAY TWO – Ishikura Tsuyoshi



ONLY THE USUAL PEOPLE...?
WELL, I'M SURE THAT A CASE OF AN ABANDONED CORPSE ISN'T BIG ENOUGH TO DRAW OUT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

BUT I WONDER IF THIS WILL ALL CHANGE SOON.


HE'LL REPEAT THE CRIME AS IF IT WAS JUST AN ACT IN A PLAY.
IN A THEATRICAL CRIME, THE CRIMINAL IS THE MAIN CHARACTER... WHILE THE POLICE OFFICERS ARE JUST CONSIDERED AS EXTRAS.

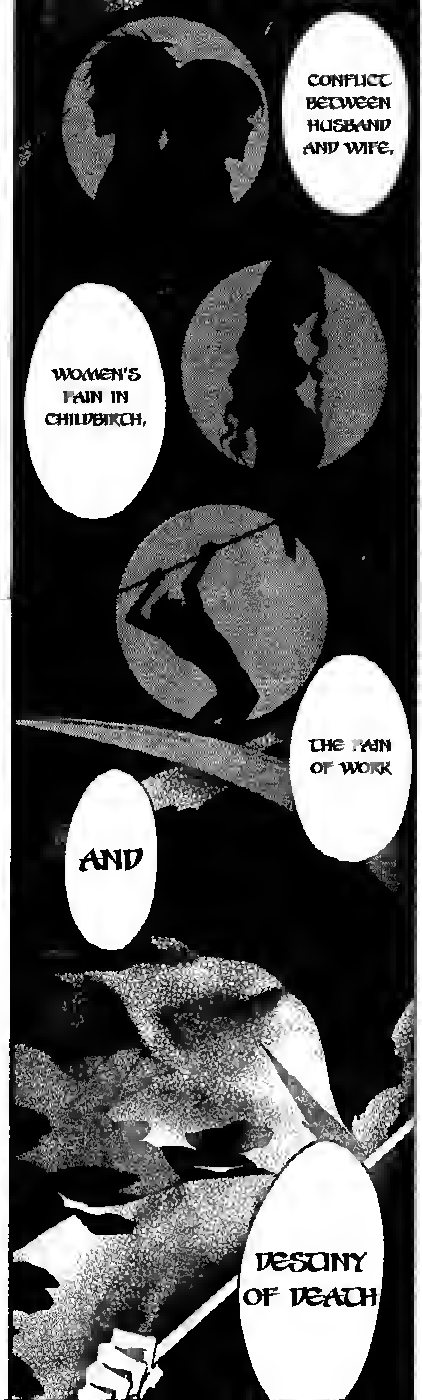
IT'S A THEATRICAL CRIME.
THIS ISN'T JUST A CASE OF AN ABAN-DONED CORPSE,

ACTUALLY, I HEARD A BIT OF A RUMOUR
DISCOVERY BY THE MEDIA AND THE BEGINNING OF RIVALRY BETWEEN NEWS AGENCIES
IS EXACTLY WHAT THE CRIMINAL WANTS.
AND TO ENTERTAIN THE MEDIA AND ORDINARY TOWNS-PEOPLE WHO ARE THE AUDIENCE,
HMM?
OF COURSE I'M NOT SAYING THAT THEY LEFT IT AT THE SCENE OF THE CRIME!
ONE OF MY FRIENDS AT UNIVERSITY KNEW A LOT ABOUT THAT MARK
THEY SHOWED ME A MARK LIKE THAT ONE IN THEIR APARTMENT
HIS ACTIONS ESCALATE...
SO...
MY FRIEND SAID THAT IT SYMBOLIZED THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT

THE BIBLE?
THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT?
YES, THE APPLE WHICH ADAM AND EVE ATE

IT DOES LOOK SOMEWHAT LIKE A BITTEN APPLE,
BUT WHAT WAS THE CRIMINAL TRYING TO SAY
BY LEAVING THIS BEHIND?
WHEN THEY ATE THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT,
THE HUMANS WERE PUNISHED BY GOD.

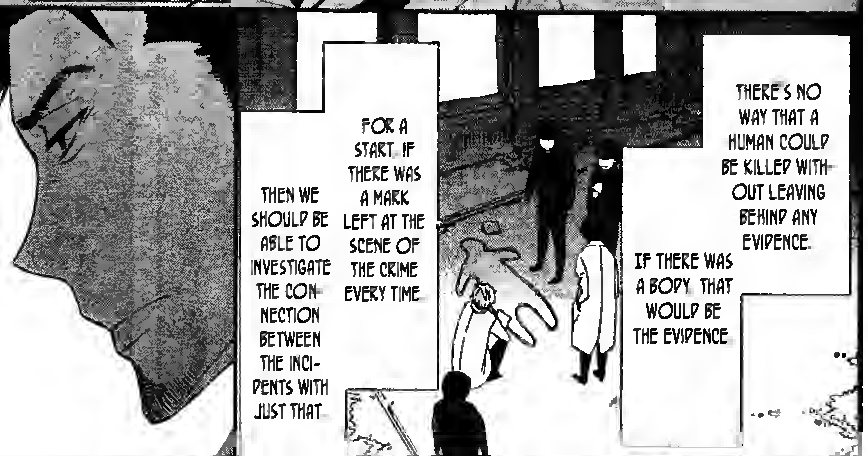
THEN SO WHAT?
THAT'S KNOWN AS THE ORIGINAL SIN
IT'S THE SIN THAT ALL HUMANS CARRY FROM BIRTH...
How stupid.
USING THE BIBLE OF ALL THINGS!
MANIPULATING US WITH THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THE CRIMINAL WANTS.
PLEASE WAIT.
THE STORY'S JUST BEGINNING.

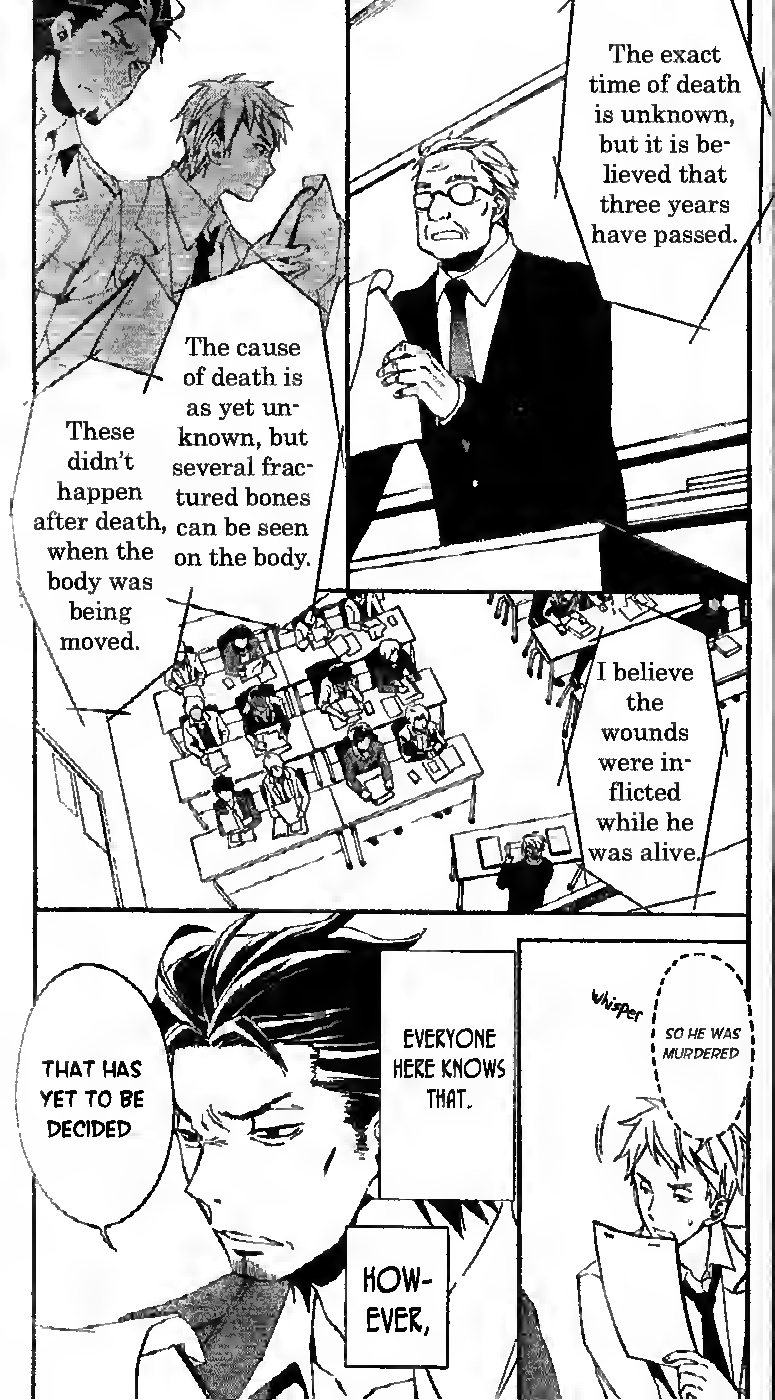

CONFLICT BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE,
WOMEN'S PAIN IN CHILDBIRTH,
THE PAIN OF WORK
AND
DESTINY OF DEATH

LISTEN. I THINK MY FRIEND HAS SEEN THAT MARK BEFORE
THIS GUY!
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT EARLIER?
ACTUALLY, IT SEEMS THAT THERE ARE RUMOURS ONLINE.
WHAT KIND?
THERE'S AN ASSASSIN
WHO LEAVES THAT MARK BEHIND!

THE ONLY THING LEFT WAS THIS MARK...
...THAT'S ENOUGH.
FURTHER-MORE, THERE WAS ABSO-LUTELY NO EVIDENCE LEFT AT THE CRIME SCENE.
HE CARRIES OUT ONE OF THE ORIGINAL SINS BESTOWED ON HUMANITY BY GOD, "THE DESTINY OF DEATH"
HUH?
An assistant?

DOESN'T HE EVEN REALIZE THAT HE'S ACTUALLY CONTRADICTING HIMSELF?
Eh
But there's more


THERE'S NO WAY THAT A HUMAN COULD BE KILLED WITH-OUT LEAVING BEHIND ANY EVIDENCE.
IF THERE WAS A BODY, THAT WOULD BE THE EVIDENCE
FOR A START, IF THERE WAS A MARK LEFT AT THE SCENE OF THE CRIME EVERY TIME
THEN WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO INVESTIGATE THE CON-NECTION BETWEEN THE INCI-DENTS WITH JUST THAT


The exact time of death is unknown, but it is believed that three years have passed.
The cause of death is as yet unknown, but several fractured bones can be seen on the body.
These didn't happen after death, when the body was being moved.
I believe the wounds were inflicted while he was alive.
THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO AVOID LEAVING EVIDENCE IN A MURDER.
THAT IS NOT TO LET THE CORPSE BE DISCOVERED.
THAT HAS YET TO BE DECIDED
EVERYONE HERE KNOWS THAT.
HOWEVER,
Whisper
SO HE WAS MURDERED

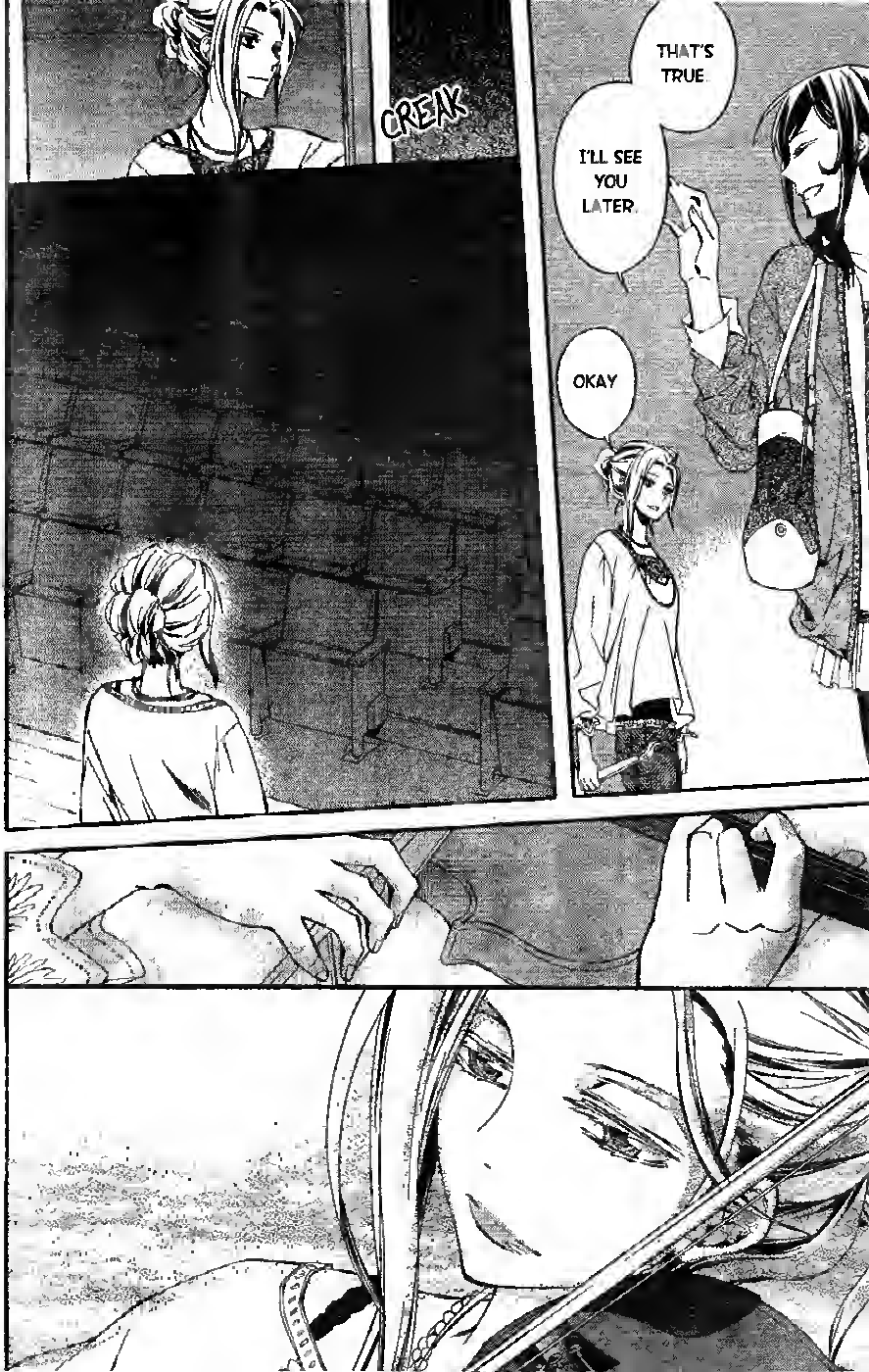
DON'T RUSH, YOUNGSTER
BUT...
But...
ISN'T IT SETTLED? DIDN'T HE SAY THERE WERE SIGNS OF BONE FRACTURES?
THERE COULD BE MANY REASONS FOR THE FRACTURES
A HUMAN WOULDN'T NECESSARILY DIE BECAUSE THEIR BONES WERE BROKEN
UNTIL DECISIVE EVIDENCE TURNS UP,
WE HAVE TO LOOK INTO EVERY POSSIBILITY.
JUST LEAVE IT!
NO, BUT...
The victim's blood type is B, his gender is male, and he is between 20 and 30 years old...

IT'S ALL AMBIGUOUS INFORMATION.
JUST AS I THOUGHT.
THIS PHOTO IS THE CLUE...

JUST WAIT UNTIL REHEARSAL'S OVER
kiss
DAY TWO - MAYA AKIHO
Close

NAOMI.
YOU'RE EARLY
SO ARE YOU.
I'VE BEEN PRETTY BUSY LATELY, SO I HAVEN'T PRACTICED AS MUCH AS I WANTED
THAT'S RIGHT, YOU'RE GETTING
MARRIED TO TAMAKI-KUN SOON
WELL, YES
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
I HAVEN'T PRACTICED MUCH RECENTLY EITHER
AND...

I DIDN'T THINK PRACTICE WOULD START AGAIN
RIGHT!
I THOUGHT IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN THIS TIME, SO I PUT AWAY ALL MY MUSIC
IT WAS REALLY TERRIBLE, WASN'T IT?
CONDUCTOR NAKANO SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED
DID THAT MAKE YOU HATE THIS?
NOT AT ALL!
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS THE NEW CONDUCTOR?
HE'S JUST A SUBSTITUTE, SO DON'T GET YOUR HOPES UP


CREAK
THAT'S TRUE.
I'LL SEE YOU LATER.
OKAY

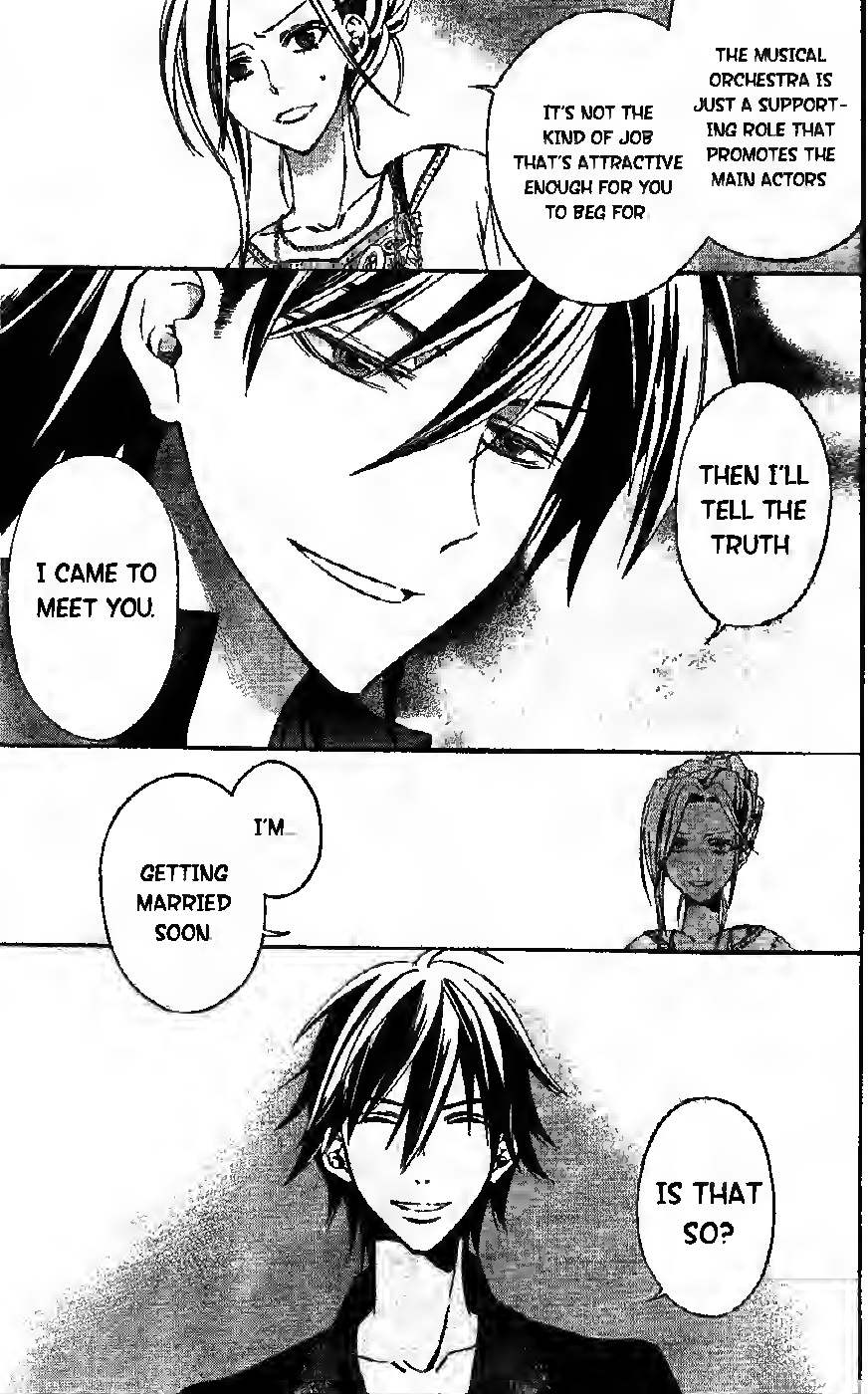
I THINK I PLAYED THAT WELL.
PAGANINI'S "VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 1 IN D MAJOR"
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
WONDERFUL.
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

STEP
STEP
DON'T CALL ME SOMETHING DISTANT LIKE "YUUKI-SAN"
YU...
YUUKI-SAN...?
THAT VOICE...
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
DON'T ASK YOUR LOVER SOMETHING LIKE "WHY"

I REMEMBER IT LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY
THIS PERSON
THAT'S IN THE PAST
UNDERNEATH HIS SMILE LIKE THIS.
HIDES HIS TRUE EMOTIONS
UNTIL THAT MOMENT
FIVE YEARS AGO.
WHILE WE WERE DATING, I THOUGHT THAT WAS PART OF HIS CHARM... HIS BROAD-MINDED NATURE...

THAT'S WHY I REMEMBER FEELING RELIEVED WHEN HE DECIDED TO STUDY ABROAD AND WE BROKE UP.
BUT...
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
I'M THE CONDUCTOR I CAME TO DIRECT THE MUSICAL
YOU'RE THE NEW CONDUCTOR?
SO IT SEEMS
WHY!?
I WAS THE ONE WHO ASKED HIM

FROM THAT TIME, I STOPPED BELIEVING IN HIM
AND BEGAN TO FEAR WHAT LAY BENEATH THAT SMILE.


THE MUSICAL ORCHESTRA IS JUST A SUPPORTING ROLE THAT PROMOTES THE MAIN ACTORS
IT'S NOT THE KIND OF JOB THAT'S ATTRACTIVE ENOUGH FOR YOU TO BEG FOR
THEN I'LL TELL THE TRUTH
I CAME TO MEET YOU.
I'M... GETTING MARRIED SOON.
IS THAT SO?

I'M GETTING MARRIED TO TAMAKI-KUN.
I SEE.
I'M RELIEVED THAT IT'S HIM.

I'M GLAD YOU'RE HAPPY
LET'S TALK PROPERLY LATER
HE'S NOT EVEN A LITTLE
SURPRISED...?
TAMAKI-KUN

PEOPLE CHANGE
AS TIME PASSES.
THIS IS JUST LIKE WHAT HAPPENED FIVE YEARS AGO.
BUT I WON'T CHASE HIM ANYMORE.
I WON'T SHED ANY TEARS EITHER.

YOU SHOULD
REALIZE THAT.
I DIDN'T BELIEVE
THAT I WOULD SEE AKIHO AGAIN.
DAY TWO - Yuuki Yasufumi
SHE HAS BECOME EVEN MORE BEAUTIFUL
THAN SHE WAS FIVE YEARS AGO.

HAVE YOU BECOME MORE BEAUTIFUL BECAUSE YOU'RE GETTING MARRIED ?
YOUR BEAUTY WASN'T BECAUSE OF MAKEUP OR CLOTHING.
BUT FROM EXPERIENCING TRUE HAPPINESS.
SO WHAT ABOUT IT?
HER MARRIAGE TO TAMAKI WAS A PREDICTABLE OCCURRENCE.
INSTEAD, FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF THE CONTRACT,
THAT WOULD BE MORE BENEFICIAL TO THE BOTH OF US.
I'LL ONLY DESTROY MYSELF
IF I THINK OF UNNECESSARY THINGS.
YUUKI-KUN...?

...KUCHIKI
IT'S BEEN A WHILE FIVE YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE GRADUATION!
SO HAVE YOU COME HOME TEMPORARILY, MR. MAESTRO?
It really is Ueki-kun!
...NO.
I THINK I'LL BE WORKING IN JAPAN FROM NOW ON
IS THAT SO!?
SOUNDS GREAT!
EH?
SO YOU'RE THE SAME AS EVER

NO WAY!
ACCEPTING EVERYONE'S WORDS TOO EASILY
THIS TIME I'LL BE CONDUCTING THE MUSICAL
IT'S TRUE
I'M GOING TO BE RELENTLESS, SO PREPARE YOURSELF!
WELL,
DON'T BE TOO HARD ON ME
WITHOUT ASKING ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS
I'LL SEE YOU LATER THEN
click

IT'S FUNNY.
TALKING WITH A SMILE ON HER FACE.
EVEN THOUGH FIVE YEARS HAVE ALREADY GONE BY.
WHAT WILL SHE LOOK LIKE WHEN SHE FINDS OUT THE TRUTH?
AH, YUUKI-SAN.
COME IN!

THANK YOU FOR YESTERDAY
NO, I SHOULD THANK YOU
AH, I'LL INTRODUCE YOU.
THIS IS KASHIWAI TAKEO-SAN, WHO WILL BE THE DIRECTOR THIS TIME
.....
NICE TO MEET YOU. I'M YUUKI, THE CONDUCTOR
AH.
I'VE HEARD THINGS ABOUT YOU.
smile
WE'RE REALLY LUCKY TO GET YUUKI-SAN TO COME.
KASHIWAI-SAN IS A DIRECTOR THAT WE'RE EXPECTING A LOT OF THINGS FROM.

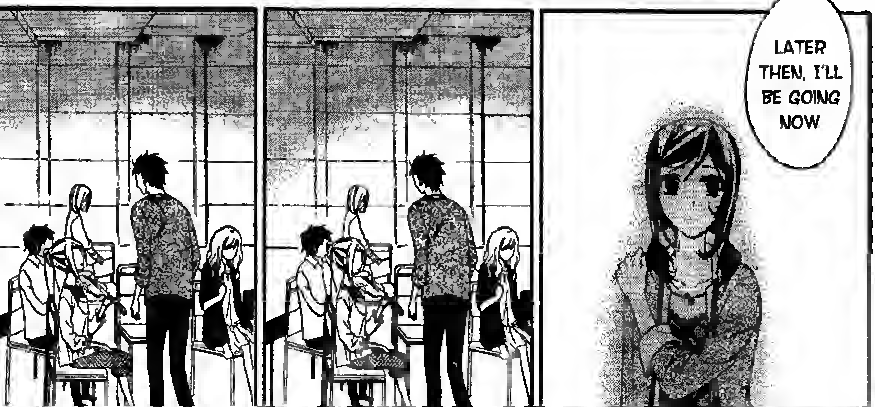
THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION CONCERT?
IT MUST HAVE BEEN BORING
WELL, IT WAS INTERESTING IN ITS OWN WAY
THE ONE AT OPERA CITY FIVE YEARS AGO.
AIBA-KUN TOLD ME ABOUT THE CONCERT YOU CONDUCTED.
IN ITS OWN WAY...
blow
IN ITS OWN WAY?
I'M HONOURED THAT YOU FOUND IT ENJOYABLE IN ITS OWN WAY.
MUSIC IS SOMETHING THAT ONLY THOSE FEW WHO ARE CHOSEN BY GOD ARE ALLOWED TO UNDERSTAND AND CONTROL.
DOES THIS LUMP OF FAT EVEN UNDERSTAND MUSIC?

NO, YUUKI-SAN'S SKILLS ARE FIRST CLASS! PEOPLE WILL BE TALKING ABOUT THE MUSICAL JUST BECAUSE HE'S THE CONDUCTOR!
WHY WOULD SUCH AN AMAZING PERSON CONDUCT OUR MUSICAL?
BAM
ANY...
ANYWAY, ABOUT THE SCHEDULE FROM NOW ON...
A CHANGE OF PACE, HUH?
FOR A CHANGE OF PACE I CAN ALSO LEARN SOMETHING IF I OCCASIONALLY TAKE DIFFERENT JOBS
ACK!!

I'M SORRY. I'LL CLEAN THIS UP IMMEDIATELY.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
AH, YES. I'M SORRY.
I KNEW IT.
I PROBABLY SHOULDN'T HAVE ACCEPTED THIS JOB.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YUUKI-KUN CAME BACK.
AS A FRIEND, I'M HAPPY THAT YUUKI-KUN IS THE CONDUCTOR,
BUT AKIHO AND TAMAKI-KUN ARE ALSO MEMBERS THIS TIME.
BECAUSE I'VE KNOWN ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THOSE THREE SINCE UNIVERSITY,
I CAN'T SIMPLY BE HAPPY ABOUT IT.
I WONDER IF AKIHO MET YUUKI-KUN IN THE CONCERT HALL EARLIER.

BAM
SHUDDER
WHAT ARE YOU SPACING OUT FOR?
PAT
AGAIN...
I SHUDDERED WHEN A MAN TOUCHED ME.
WHAT'S WRONG?
AH.
SORRY, TAMAKI-KUN
I WAS JUST A LITTLE SURPRISED


LATER THEN, I'LL BE GOING NOW

CLATTER
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY SAID TO EACH OTHER,
BUT I WONDER IF THOSE TWO ARE ALRIGHT...
CHATTER
step
step
step

NICE TO MEET YOU, I'M YUUKI YASUFUMI
FROM TODAY I'LL BE CONDUCTING THIS ORCHESTRA.
JUST BECAUSE I'M A SUBSTITUTE DOESN'T MEAN THAT I WILL BE GOING EASY ON YOU.
IN THIS REMAINING WEEK, I INTEND TO RAISE OUR MUSIC'S QUALITY TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL, SO EVERYONE SHOULD WORK TOWARD THIS AS WELL.

I EXPERIENCED HIS CONDUCTING MANY TIMES WHEN I WAS A STUDENT.
THEN LET'S WARM UP IMMEDIATELY.

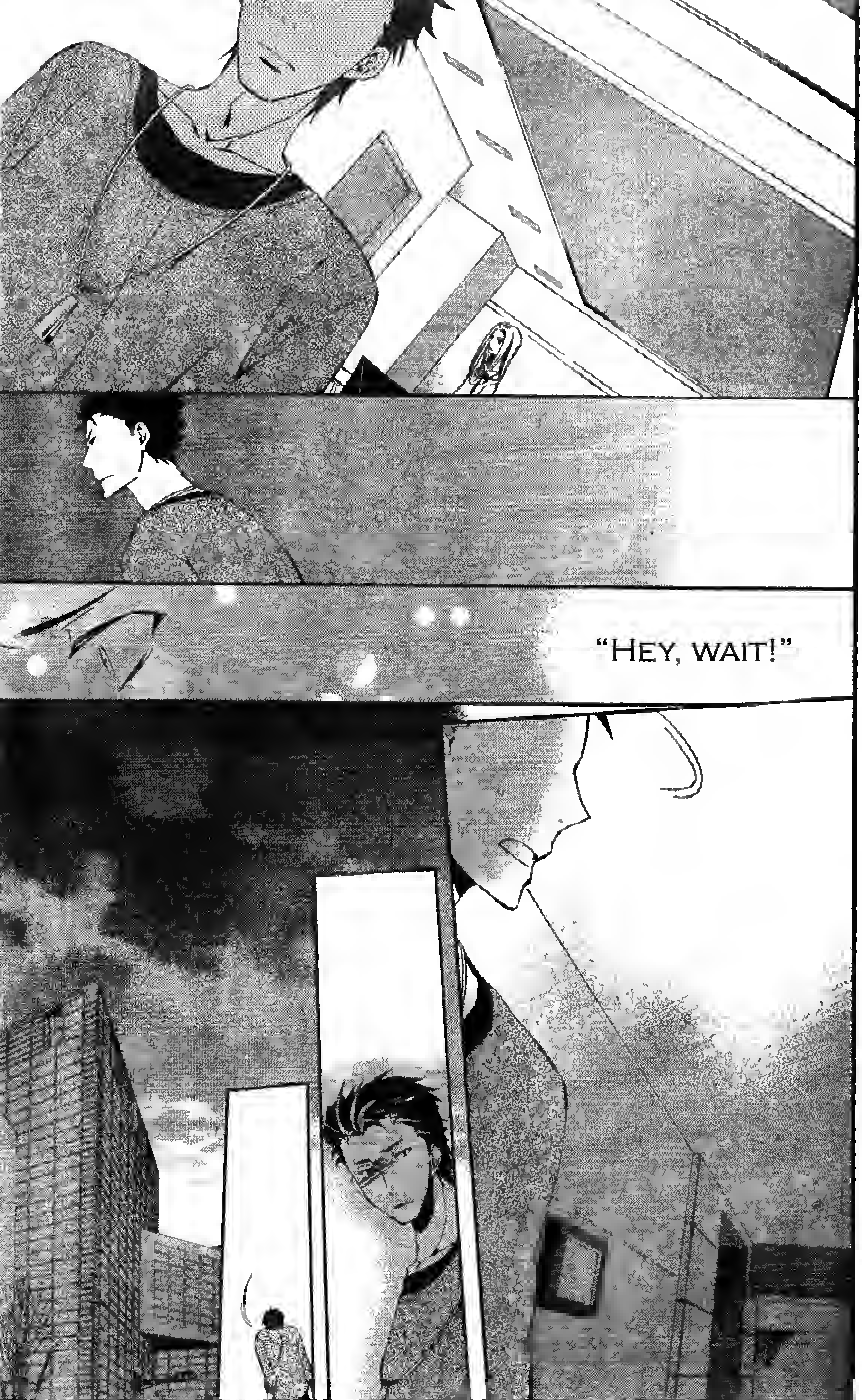
I FEEL BAD FOR AKIHO AND TAMAKI-KUN
BUT I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HOW YUUKI-KUN CHANGED
WHILE HE WAS OVERSEAS.

NO, CALM DOWN.
WE AGREED THAT YUUKI AND AKIHO WOULD BREAK UP, THEN HE WOULD LEAVE TO STUDY ABROAD,
BUT I NEVER TOLD HIM NOT TO COME BACK.
WHY DID HE COME BACK NOW?
THIS IS AGAINST THE RULES!
TAMAKI-KUN.
THERE'S NO WAY SHE WOULD CHANGE HER MIND NOW.
BESIDES,
AKIHO IS GOING TO MARRY ME.

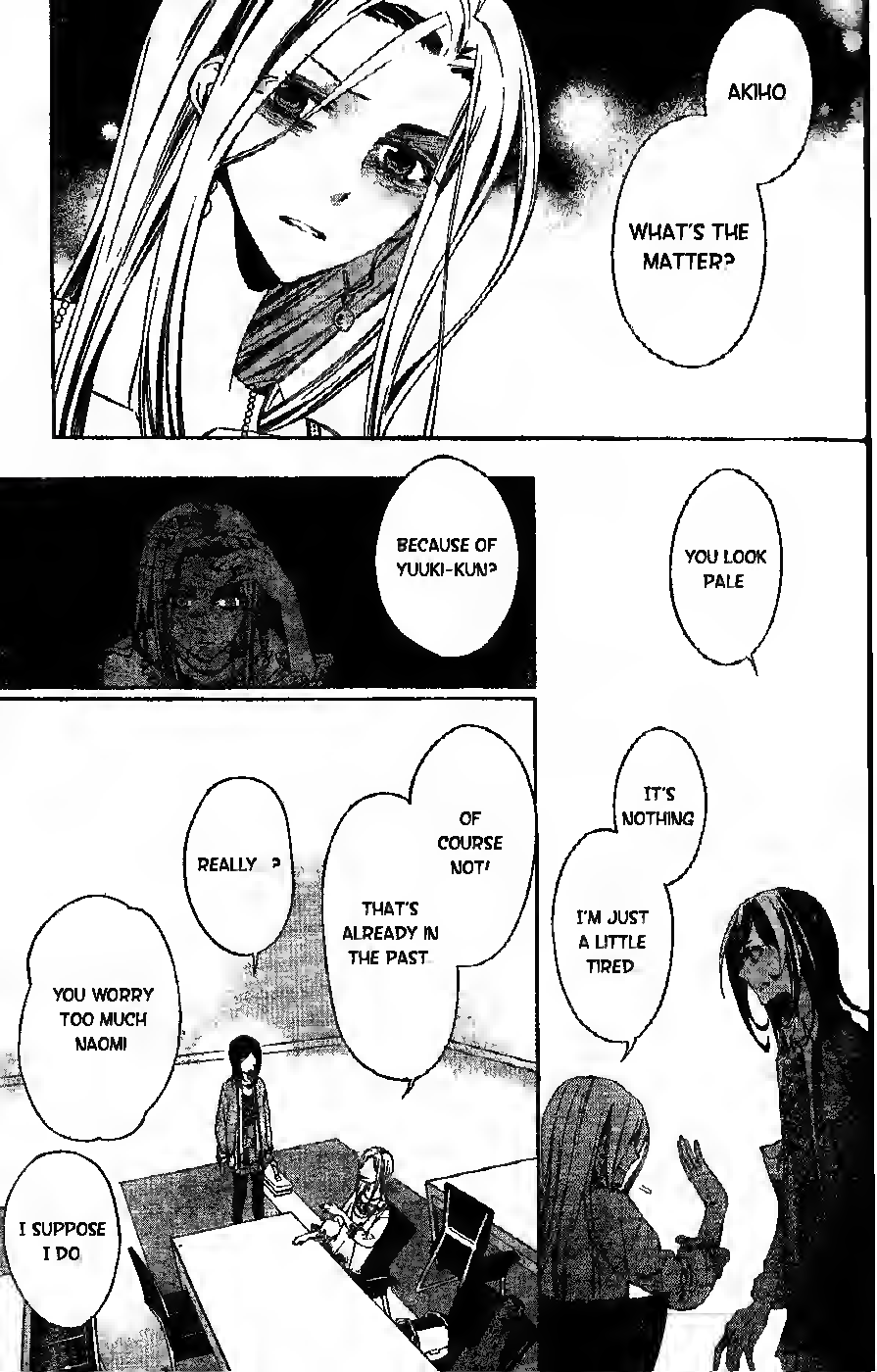
DO YOU WANT TO GO AND EAT NOW?
IS FAR FROM THE SMILING FACE IN THAT PHOTO.
HER FORCED SMILE
HEY. WHAT'S WRONG?
IS SHE CONCERNED ABOUT ME?
IF SO, I'D RATHER SHE WAS CRYING.

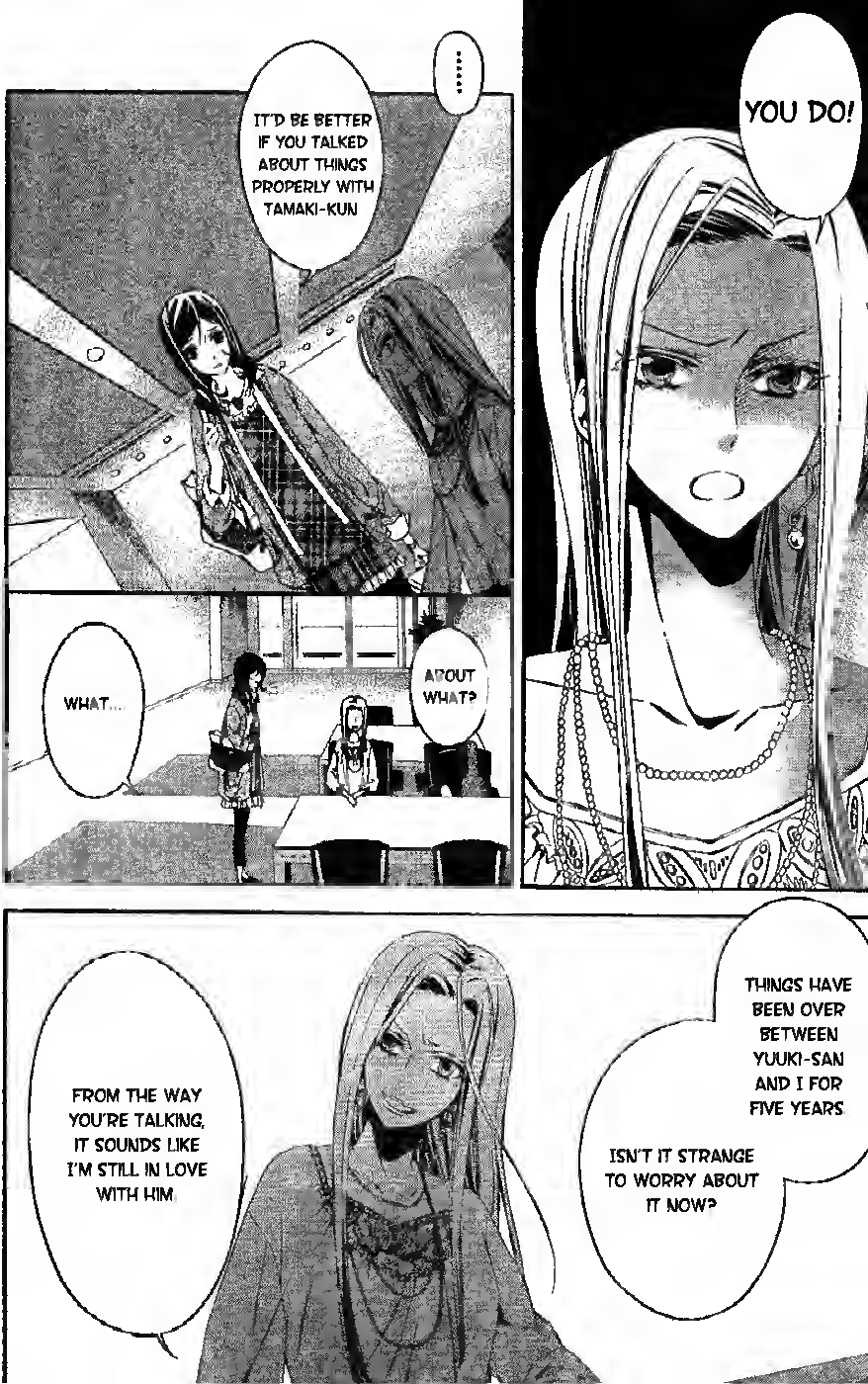
I'M A LITTLE TIRED TODAY.
SORRY, BUT I'LL BE GOING AHEAD
IT'S NO GOOD,
IF WE'RE TOGETHER NOW, THEN SHE'LL SEE THAT I'M CONCERNED ABOUT YUUKI'S RETURN.
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG
THEN LET'S GO
I'M NOT SUCH A NARROW-MINDED MAN.
I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW
I UNDERSTAND
SHE REALLY DOESN'T CARE ABOUT YUUKI?
WHY DOES SHE LOOK SO CALM?

NO, PERHAPS...
SHE MIGHT HAVE ACTUALLY KNOWN, AND HAD BEEN CONTACTING HIM THROUGH PHONE OR EMAIL...
COME TO THINK OF IT, WHEN YUUKI CAME IN
AKIHO'S FACIAL EXPRESSION DIDN'T CHANGE.
AS IF SHE KNEW ABOUT ALL THIS FROM THE BEGINNING,
THOSE TWO MIGHT HAVE BEEN MEETING IN SECRET OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
YES.
I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW.


"HEY, WAIT!"

YUUKI-KUN'S CONDUCTING WAS LIKE A PRECISE MACHINE,
I FELT AS IF I WAS SUFFO-CATING DURING THE PERFORMANCE.
ALTHOUGH HE IMPROVED HIS SKILLS BY STUDYING ABROAD, HE'S BASICALLY NO DIFFERENT FROM WHEN HE WAS A STUDENT.
I'M PROBABLY A LITTLE DIS-APPOINTED...


AKIHO
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
YOU LOOK PALE
BECAUSE OF YUUKI-KUN?
IT'S NOTHING
I'M JUST A LITTLE TIRED
OF COURSE NOT!
THAT'S ALREADY IN THE PAST
REALLY ?
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH NAOMI
I SUPPOSE I DO


.....
IT'D BE BETTER IF YOU TALKED ABOUT THINGS PROPERLY WITH TAMAKI-KUN
YOU DO!
WHAT...
ABOUT WHAT?
THINGS HAVE BEEN OVER BETWEEN YUUKI-SAN AND I FOR FIVE YEARS
ISN'T IT STRANGE TO WORRY ABOUT IT NOW?
FROM THE WAY YOU'RE TALKING, IT SOUNDS LIKE I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH HIM

THAT'S NOT TRUE...
THEN WHAT?
IT'S BECAUSE I'M WORRIED...
WHY ARE YOU LIKE THAT?
SHOULDN'T YOU SORT OUT YOUR OWN EMOTIONS BEFORE WORRYING ABOUT ME?
MY EMOTIONS?
THAT'S RIGHT.
WHEN DID YOU FORGET ABOUT HIM?

WHO IS HE?
DON'T PLAY DUMB! WEREN'T YOU THE ONE PERSON WHO COULD NEVER FORGET THAT THING?
SOMEONE LIKE THAT HAS NO RIGHT TO COMPLAIN!

WHAT IS SHE SAYING?
GOOD WORK
THANK YOU.
WHAT IS "THAT" THING?

THAT'S RIGHT.
I FORGOT TO SAY THIS

KUCHIKI SHOULD FIND A PARTNER SOON TOO
I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW
THANK YOU.
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR MARRIAGE
I'M HEADING HOME TOO.

I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO FIX MY MAKEUP...
SOMEHOW I MADE IT IN TIME.
THE DOCTOR ISN'T HERE YET.

WEREN'T YOU THE ONE PERSON WHO COULD NEVER FORGET THAT THING?
IT SOUNDED AS IF I HAD SOME TROUBLE WITH A BOYFRIEND.
BUT HAVE BEEN ALONE SINCE THEN.
AT THE END OF MY HIGH SCHOOL DAYS.
I HADN'T PROPERLY DATED ANYONE.
EVEN IF A MAN TRIES TO GET CLOSE TO ME, I ALWAYS BACK AWAY AT THE LAST MOMENT.
BECAUSE I GET SCARED SOMEHOW...
.....
DR. MATSUZAKI'S LATE...

GOOD EVENING.
PAT
HE'S FIFTEEN MINUTES LATE.
But he didn't apologize.
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU WHILE YOU'RE BUSY
YOUR NOTEBOOK... I SHOULD GIVE IT TO YOU BE-FORE I FORGET.

AH...
Flutter
THANK YOU VERY
MUCH
OH...
WHAT AM I DOING?

...?
WAS I CARRYING SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
HERE'S ANOTHER ONE
AH
THANKS
THIS IS FROM MY MUSIC COLLEGE DAYS.
CHRISTMAS EVE FIVE YEARS AGO.
BUT THIS IS...? HIS FACE HAS BEEN BLOTTED OUT.

I DON'T KNOW
THIS PERSON...!
BUT WHO IS THIS PERSON?
I'M... SMILING SO HAPPILY,
...IS THAT YOUR BOYFRIEND?
I DON'T KNOW
THE "NIGHTMARE" IS FOLLOWED BY "MISSING MEMORIES"...
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED TO NAOMI!?
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コンダクター

The Conductor

AUTHOR 神永学 ARTIST 野奇夜

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Publisher: Kadotawa Shoten
Author: Kaminaga Manabu
Artist: Noki Ya

Scanner: Ayu
Cleaners: Saffron & Sapphire Pyro
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